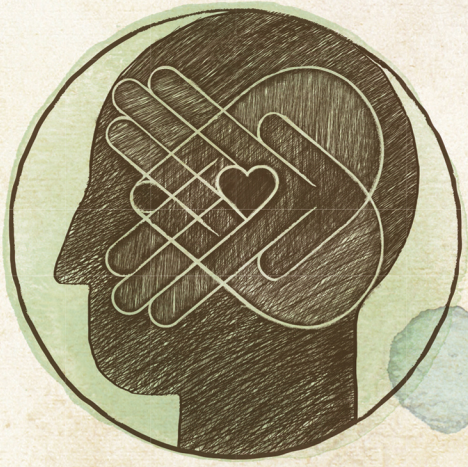
LOVING GOD *with*  *your* MIND

ESSAYS IN HONOR OF J. P. MORELAND

EDITORS: PAUL M. GOULD & RICHARD BRIAN DAVIS

Afterword by J. P. Moreland

Contributors: Paul Copan, Douglas Groothuis,

Scott B. Rae, Stewart Goetz, and others

LOVING GOD *with your* MIND

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ESSAYS IN HONOR OF J. P. MORELAND

General Editors
PAUL M. GOULD & RICHARD BRIAN DAVIS

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Dallas Willard (September 4, 1935–May 8, 2013) was to write the foreword for this book honoring J. P. Moreland. Before he could do so, the Lord called Willard to his eternal home. In place of the foreword we offer this story, recounted to us by Willard's daughter Becky.

. . . . . .

Dallas was at a gathering somewhere, and someone said, "Dallas, wasn't J. P. Moreland one of your students?" The answer was, "Oh, no. I was *his* student!"

We, like Willard, are J. P.'s students (indeed some of us *are* former students, but all of us, like Willard, have learned more from J. P. than he has learned from us).

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Introduction: A Life Fully Devoted *to* Christ *for the* Sake *of the* World

PAUL M. GOULD AND RICHARD BRIAN DAVIS

"EACH MAN'S LIFE TOUCHES so many other lives. When he isn't around, he leaves an awful hole, doesn't he?" One of the most memorable lines in movie history—this is of course the question the angel Clarence asks George Bailey in the enduring Christmas classic *It's a Wonderful Life*. Never was its answer a more resounding "yes" than when applied to the life and ministry of J. P. Moreland: Christian leader, philosopher, professor, and friend. Over the last thirty years and more, J. P. has touched thousands and thousands of lives through his scholarly and popular writings, university lectures, public debates, sermons, and interviews. He has spawned a movement of younger evangelicals, who have caught the vision of loving God with the mind for the sake of the body of Christ and our fallen world. Thirty years ago, the idea that it was important (nay, imperative) as a disciple of Jesus to develop a distinctly Christian mind, one able to "take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ" (2 Cor. 10:5), was still very much in its infancy in the church. What a difference three decades of tireless service have made. The Christian intellectual and apologetic landscape looks vastly different today: apologetic clubs, conferences, summer camps, parachurch groups, radio programs, blogs, and websites now litter the cultural horizon. So much of the energy

and push behind this ever-growing movement has been J. P.'s tireless kingdom work. If he hadn't been around, it would have indeed left an "awful hole."

This is certainly the case for the editors of the book you now hold in your hands. One of us (Richard) was working as an accountant in a large corporation, and struggling (as a very young Christian) to figure out how to communicate my faith to work colleagues in an intellectually respectable way—indeed, to simply discover for myself why I believed what I did. The more I shared my faith, the more questions I was asked—questions for which I had no answers. The questions seemed to grow at an exponential rate, the answers at a snail's pace. It wasn't until 1987 that the clouds began to dispel, when I stumbled upon a light blue book with the title *Scaling the Secular City: A Defense of Christianity* emblazoned on the cover. It had been published that year. I bought it, read it, re-read it, photocopied parts for people at work, and eventually became so absorbed by the ideas it contained that I left the world of accounting to become a Christian philosopher. Over the years, and without even knowing it, J. P. discipled me through his writing and speaking. In human terms, whatever I am today, it's mostly due to him.

The other of us (Paul) was working as a young staff member for a Christian organization on a university campus, and trying to communicate the truth of the gospel in a (sometimes) hostile environment. I noticed two things early on: first, truth is on our side (as Christians) yet we seemed to be losing in the classroom. Second, there was a growing passion within myself to learn—to know at a deeper level—the great truths of Christianity. These twin observations led me to pick up two books by J. P.: *Scaling the Secular City* and *Love Your God with All Your Mind*.[1] Both books were instrumental in my intellectual and spiritual development. After reading and pondering these books, with my appetite whet, I packed up our family and moved to Los Angeles to study philosophy at Talbot with J. P. At Talbot, through his teaching, ministry, and example, J. P. continued to shape my life. I took every class I could from him; we had J. P. and Hope over for dinner (an impactful event as a young grad student); and I watched his life. And I learned—yes, about how to be a good philosopher, but more importantly—how to be a fellow pilgrim on the way, an apprentice of Jesus. And to this day, J. P.'s influence continues to manifest itself in my life—it's his fault that I am a Platonist (and wrote a dissertation on Platonic Theism at Purdue University); it's his fault that I expect my students to aspire to greatness; it's his fault (and through his example) that I am learning to make self-denial natural in my own life. I am person-

ally grateful to God for J. P. Moreland.

There are hundreds of stories just like these from people all across the country and around the world. This book was birthed out of conversations between its editors on the scope and impact of J. P.'s ministry influence, and our desire to pay tribute to him for his service and sacrifice on behalf of the body of Christ. (If you know J. P.'s story, he could easily have taken a wholly different path, pursuing doctoral work in chemistry instead!) He has led us well, worked "hard at preaching and teaching;" he is unquestionably "worthy of double honor" (1 Tim. 5:17).

This book aims to do that, but much more. It is also for you, the reader, to introduce you to the rich intellectual resources of J. P.'s thinking. And with over thirty books and hundreds of publications to his credit, that is surely no mean feat! To that end, we've assembled a team of leading Christian scholars and thinkers: experts in their respective fields who can draw together the strands and plumb the depths of J. P.'s vast corpus, packaging it in a way that is both illuminating and user-friendly, while innovatively extending J. P.'s ideas to address emerging ideas in the academy, the church, and the culture. Many of the contributors to this volume are household names in the areas of philosophy, theology, apologetics, spiritual formation, and church ministry. They are J. P.'s colleagues, former students, and partners in ministry. They are friends who deeply love and admire the man—just for being J. P.

The volume is neatly divided into three interrelated parts. In the first, "The Building Blocks of the World," you'll be treated to a panorama of J. P.'s comprehensive vision of all of reality (his metaphysics). Christians, of course, believe that in addition to physical reality, there is a "God who made the world and everything in it" (Acts 17:24). According to metaphysical naturalists, however, everything that exists is purely material: no God, no angels, demons, or human souls. As Daniel Dennett sometimes puts it, naturalism is the view that there are "no spooks." J. P.'s response to the naturalist is perfectly captured by the words of Hamlet to Horatio: "There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy" (Act 1, Scene 5).

J. P. has argued rigorously and at great length that the world contains an invisible, non-spatio-temporal realm of abstract objects: properties, relations, and the like. These are the things that underlie the visible, sense-perceptible world of particulars, and account for its fundamental characteristics, structure, and order. Without them, the world (as we know it) simply wouldn't exist. Moreover, in

addition to God and angelic persons, there are human (immaterial) souls. J. P. stands against the tide of recent trends in Christian philosophy, which attempt to reduce immaterial entities (whether abstract or personal) to concrete, physical objects. Not only is this philosophically untenable, it actually undermines Christian doctrine. Papers by Paul Gould and Stan Wallace, Robert Garcia, Timothy Pickavance, Stewart Goetz, and R. Scott Smith skillfully defend the idea that the world can be known, and known to include these sorts of things.

Part Two is titled "Thinking for Christ in the World." Given that there is a world that can be known, a host of questions arise: Can we know anything about God "from what has been made" (Rom. 1:20)? Can we know, for example, *that* God made it? And if so, how? Are there other evidences that reason can discern in discovering truths about God? In short, is Christianity a *knowledge* tradition that makes truth claims that can be supported by adequate evidence? Or is it a mere *belief* tradition: a sort of glorified self-help program in which Christian beliefs are grounded in nothing more than our personal, subjective preferences? Most of J. P.'s intellectual muscle has been devoted to demonstrating that the claims of Christianity are true (they correspond with reality) and amply justified (they are evidentially supported by reason and experience).

His work in this area has involved him in a serious and substantial engagement with the factual data of general revelation, which can be excavated from the information rich areas of philosophy, science, and ethics. His audience is both a church skeptical of apologetic reasoning (see the expanded 2nd edition of *Love Your God with All Your Mind*) and an unbelieving culture (as in *The God Question: An Invitation to a Life of Meaning*). There is a literal treasure trove of evidence and encouragement in J. P.'s writings here. And if you think about it, the potential benefits are incalculable, especially if thinking for Christ in these areas dismantles or even just loosens the suffocating stranglehold that evolutionary scientism and the "Culture of Death" have on our public schools, the courts, and our institutions of higher learning. The chapters by Douglas Groothuis, Paul Copan, Richard Davis and Paul Franks, Michael Keas, and Scott Rae all *dig in*, resisting the new wave of apologetic opposition to push the cause forward.

Way back in 1987, J. P. wrote: "Anyone who engages in the rigors of apologetics and philosophy runs the risks of becoming dry and out of touch with the emotional side of life."[2] Section Three, "Living for Christ in the World," explores this vital issue. The world we Christians find ourselves in is, as C. S. Lewis put it,

"enemy-occupied territory."[3] There is "a Dark Power in the universe—a mighty evil spirit who [is] held to be the Power behind death and disease, and sin."[4] Something has gone drastically wrong—the world isn't the way it is supposed to be! We live in a sin-shattered, shalom-violated world. And it is not just the world that is broken, it is us as well. We are fallen creatures in need of the forgiveness of sin and the restoration of our broken selves. But God, in His great love and mercy has sent His Son into the world so that we can be made whole. This is the "good news" of the gospel: humanity can be redeemed and shalom can be restored in Christ.

In recent years, J. P. has directed some of his energies to providing us with tools, insight, and motivation to live faithfully for Christ in this broken world. In books such as *Kingdom Triangle* and *The Lost Art of Happiness*, J. P. ushers the thinker for Christ into a compelling vision of the good life: a life of spiritual formation in which the soul is restored as it yields to the Holy Spirit's rejuvenating activity in the heart. It might be outside our comfort zones; but we need to hear this. It is the only way to avoid running out of apologetic fuel; it ensures we won't succumb to missional lethargy, robbing us of our character, our zeal, and our effectiveness in authentically communicating Christ to our dying culture. You will be challenged and refreshed as you hear what Tim Muehlhoff, Klaus Issler, Michael Austin, and Mike Erre have to say about this neglected aspect of Christian discipleship.

And then, finally, there is J. P.'s "Afterword." This is the *essence* of J. P. It's what individuates him, what makes him specifically different from all the other Christian philosophers we know. "[Him] we proclaim," says the Great Apostle, "warning everyone and teaching everyone in all wisdom, so that we may present everyone mature in Christ" (Col. 1:28 NRSV). The "Afterword" looks forward; it is J. P.'s advice, not just to Christian philosophers, but to all disciples of Jesus. It takes a firm stand, it proclaims and warns; it is a rallying cry—a charge to demonstrate Christian courage and to resist compromise. We don't know of anything, anywhere, even remotely like it. You'll read it again and again. It will clear the cobwebs from your mental attic, and strengthen you in your spirit. It is J. P.'s commission to those who would love God with their minds: planting, watering, and reaping until the Lord of the harvest returns.

A special thanks is in order to Brandon Rickabaugh, a current student and friend of J. P.'s, who put together the timeline of J. P.'s life and the bibliography

of J. P.'s nearly three hundred published writings. It is again a testimony to J. P. that he attracts, befriends, trains, and sends into the world such able servants of Christ.

This book is dedicated to J. P. Moreland, of whom it will always be said, "When he arrived, he greatly helped those who had believed through grace" (Acts 18:27 NASB).

Notes

1. For publication details on the titles we mention here, see the complete listing of all J. P.'s books and articles in the section "The Writings of J. P. Moreland" near the end of this book.
2. J. P. Moreland, *Scaling the Secular City* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1987), 10.
3. C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2001 edition), 46.
4. Ibid., 45.

PART ONE

The Building Blocks *of the* World

On What There Is: Theism, Platonism, *and* Explanation

PAUL M. GOULD AND STAN WALLACE

J. P. IS A METAPHYSICIAN. The word *is* used in the previous sentence is not the *is* of essential predication, nor the *is* of identity, nor the *is* of constitution. It is the *is* of accidental predication. J.P is not *essentially* a metaphysician—he could have been a chemist or a pastor or a Kansas City Royal's batboy. He is not identical to *The Metaphysician* (was that Plato? Aristotle? Husserl?). But thank God he freely chose, guided by God's sovereign hand, to become a metaphysician.

I (Paul) first got a sense of how important metaphysics (and philosophy in general) was to J. P. on September 11, 2001. Two weeks into my graduate studies at Talbot School of Theology, I woke up to the horror of America under attack by terrorists. Later that morning I had J. P.'s class on metaphysics. I wondered how much philosophy we would discuss that day, given the national emergency unfolding before our eyes. When class began, J. P. walked in and talked for a few minutes with us about what was happening in New York. But then without fanfare, J. P. said (loosely from memory), "Okay folks, we've got important things to do today, let's begin." At first I was a little shocked. I thought to myself, "Don't we have important things to talk about already—like terrorist attacks and people dying and what it all means?" The more I reflect on that day (we talked about the nature of identity, I still have my class notes), I have come to realize we *were* doing important things. Metaphysics *does* matter. It contributes to *shalom*—since

being rightly related to reality and living life well are good things in themselves and without engaging in substantive metaphysics they remain elusive. For over thirty years, J. P. has led the way in helping us all to think rightly about reality.

So, how ought we to think about reality so that we might be rightly related to it? *Metaphysics* is the branch of philosophy that takes up the challenge of thinking critically about our world. According to J. P., metaphysics is the "philosophical study of the nature of being or reality and the ultimate categories or kinds of things that are real."[1] In this chapter, we shall be concerned with understanding the world—the kinds of things there are and how they all fit together. We want to understand reality and think that J. P. Moreland is a good guide to help us in that project. Our plan of attack is as follows. First, we'll articulate a rough sketch of the world according to J. P. by stating three theses that build on each other and help ease us into the project. Next, we'll consider some worries about the overall picture thus erected and show how they can be set aside. Finally, we shall show how the resultant picture—a magical world full of God and man, abstract and concrete objects, souls and bodies, bare particulars and complex wholes—is an explanatorily powerful and satisfying view of reality.

ON WHAT THERE IS: THE WORLD

THESIS 1. EXISTENCE IS UNIVOCAL

We begin our investigation of the world with the question "What is there?" Of course, any answer to this question presupposes some theory of what it means "to be" or "to exist." J. P. argues that existence is univocal—there is one sense of the verb "to exist" and that sense is as follows:[2]

"x exists" = df. "x has some property F."

For example, Jones exists if and only if Jones has some property, say *being human*; the number three exists if and only if the number three has some property, say *being prime*. Alternatively, the unicorn, Pegasus, does not exist since there is no object that has the property *being a unicorn*. Nothing has that property and "*nothingness* is just that—nothing."[3] Still, our *concept* of Pegasus (a mental property) does exist since it (the concept of Pegasus) is a concept of something that would have the property of *being a one-horned flying horse* if it existed. An important corollary of J. P.'s definition of existence is there is a difference between a thing's nature and its existence. The vast difference between me and God does

not consist in our having vastly different sorts of *being* (or "reality" or "existence"); it consists rather in our having vastly different sorts of *natures*; the vast difference between an abstract object and a concrete object does not consist in their existing in difference senses (e.g., one is not more real than the other), rather it consists in having vastly different sorts of natures.[4] Armed with this theory of existence, we can again ask our ontological question, "What is there?"

Thesis 2. There Is a Ready-made World Consisting of Natural Classes of Objects

One answer to this ontological question is of course "everything"—and we are in no need of philosophical or scientific investigation to convince us of the truth of this answer. Everything that is, exists. But this is at once too general and nonsystematic to be informative—or to be considered a satisfactory answer to the ontological question. We try again. J. P. believes that reality is "cut at the joints"—there is a ready-made world and this world consists of natural groupings of objects.[5] Thus, an answer to the ontological question will be in terms of *ontological categories*—(nonempty) natural classes of objects that constitute the building blocks of the world. The concept of "natural class" is a bit vague but not so much so that it cannot be usefully employed. For our purposes, we shall consider a natural class of objects a group of things that exhibit (i) "sufficient internal unity" so as to constitute a real division among things; and (ii) whose membership comprises a really significant proportion of the things that there are.[6] Call the universal class—the class of all existent things—"object."[7]

The *primary ontological category* is the highest link in the great chain of nonarbitrary classification below the universal class. J. P. endorses what van Inwagen calls a *polycategorical ontology*: there are two categories—universal and particular—that are not subcategories of any other ontological category.[8] Universals are entities that can be exemplified (had, instantiated, possessed) by many things at the same time whereas a particular is defined contrastively as a non-universal.[9] J. P.'s primary ontological categories, universal and particular, could also be labeled correspondingly as "abstract object" and "concrete object" where an abstract object is a nonessentially spatio-temporal necessary being that is not a person and a concrete object is defined contrastively as nonabstract.[10]

A "secondary ontological category" or "tertiary ontological category" are natural subclasses of their higher-level class: "x is a natural subclass of y if x is

a subclass of y and x is a natural class."[11] J. P.'s secondary ontological categories consist of his ontological simples—objects that possess no intrinsic complexity. Subclasses under "universal" include "property," "relation," and "number." The subclass under "particular" is the Morelandian "bare particular." J. P.'s tertiary ontological categories consist of high-level complex objects, that is, objects that have other constituent objects from a secondary ontological category as metaphysical parts. Under the subclass "property," there is "potentiality," which grounds modal discourse (that is, talk about the possible and impossible) and "proposition," understood as a kind of structured mental property; under the subclass "bare particular," there is "state of affairs," "substance," and "ordered aggregate." This sketch of J. P.'s ontology can be seen in Figure 1 below.

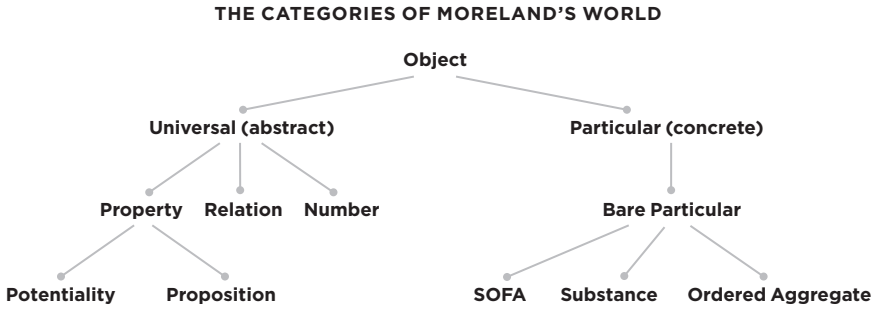

Figure 1

To believe, as J. P. does, in abstract objects is to endorse Platonism. For J. P., there are an actually infinite number of abstract objects.[12] A discussion of how members of the abstract world, the Platonic heaven, relate to members of the concrete world ("the universe") leads us to one of J. P.'s novel theses—ordinary objects have abstract objects non-spatially "in" them as constituents.[13]

Thesis 3. The Ontological Structure of Ordinary Objects Is Assayed in Terms of the Constituent-Whole Relation

Minimally, to exemplify a property is to possess or have a property. This much, most philosophers can agree on. Broadly speaking, two distinct styles of metaphysical explanation can be discerned for understanding property possession by ordinary concrete objects. Aristotle tells us that the items (intuitively) had or possessed by sensible particulars can be understood to exist either "separate from the

sensible things" or "present in them" (996[a]15-16). More recently, van Inwagen[14] (following Nicholas Wolterstorff[15]) speaks of relational and constituent ontologies. Aristotle's and van Inwagen's distinction is meant, it seems, to mark out the same contrast. The expressions "in" and "separate" can be used to mark a variety of contrasts, but the operative contrast in these two distinct styles seems to be as follows: to be in a thing is to be a proper constituent of the thing, whereas to be separate is to exist apart from the thing. As Michael Loux points out, the force of "separate" here is parasitic on its opposition to "in."[16]

Both approaches tell us that substances exhibit whatever character they have in virtue of properties had by it. Thus, we find the following framework constraint in play for both metaphysical styles:

Principle for Character Grounding (PCG): Properties Explain the Character Things Have

God's being divine is partially explained by the property *being divine*; Socrates' being wise is partially explained by the property *being wise*. In some sense then, properties are explanatorily prior to the things that have them. PCG highlights what we shall call the primary role for Platonic properties, a role J. P. endorses: that of *making* or structuring reality.[17] As George Bealer observes, "[Properties] play a fundamental constitutive role in the structure of the world."[18]

So, both approaches endorse PCG. However, the two approaches differ in their account of how character exhibition is to be further analyzed. Those who endorse the constituent approach tell us that the familiar objects of our everyday experience exhibit their character in virtue of their constituent metaphysical and physical parts (where a metaphysical part is meant to range over properties that are in ordinary concrete objects). On the relational approach, by contrast, familiar concrete objects exhibit their character through objects that are not immanent in those substances. Rather, as Aristotle puts it, they exist "apart from the sensibles," and it is in virtue of standing in some non-mereological relation to those objects that the familiar concrete objects exhibit the character that they do.

J. P. is decidedly a constituent ontologist with respect to ordinary concrete objects. Consider the following sentence:

(1) Socrates is human.

According to J. P., (1) can be further analyzed as:

(2) *Being human* inheres in Socrates as a constituent.

and

(3) Socrates' bare particular exemplifies *being human*.

Sentences (2) and (3) are understood as follows: Socrates (a substance) has "rooted within" himself the property *being human* as a constituent. The property inheres in Socrates where "inherence" is understood as "a non-spatial, primitive relation that cannot be analyzed further."[19] Inherence, according to J. P. is further grounded in the exemplification relation (also understood as a primitive, non-spatial relation) expressed in (3). That is, the same property inheres in the substance Socrates (the whole) and is exemplified by the individuator (Socrates' bare particular), which is also a constituent of Socrates. Thus, properties *inhere* in substances and are *exemplified* by the substances' bare particular. Substances (such as Socrates) as well as other concrete objects that possess abstract objects as constituents are particulars and (thus) spatio-temporally located even though some of their constituent parts are not spatio-temporally located due to what J. P. calls the victory of particularity: "When a particular exemplifies a universal, the resulting state of affairs…is itself a particular."[20] Universals (abstract objects) are non-spatially "in" the concrete particulars that have them. Further, J. P. believes that we can be directly aware of the universal "in" the concrete object through a kind of perception called (following Husserl) eidetic intuition.[21] Much more can be said of course, but the above suffices to raise worries about the coherence and intelligibility of the world according to J. P., worries we shall next consider.

WORRIES ABOUT THE WORLD ACCORDING TO J. P.

One worry, advanced recently by Peter van Inwagen with much bewilderment is that the kind of Platonic constituent ontology advance by J. P. is literally meaningless—and (if not meaningless) queer besides. To say that something can be "in" another thing in a non-spatial sense does seem a bit queer, so let's call this first worry the *Queerness Worry*. Upon reflection, the notion of a non-spatial sense of "in" is not entirely opaque, however. Consider immaterial agents such as God or souls. It is plausible to endorse the claim that thoughts are in immaterial minds non-spatially. *Prima facie*, it is natural to think that thoughts must be in the substance that has them. And if the substance is immaterial, then they are in it non-

spatially. So, the notion of a non-spatial "in" doesn't seem problematic, or queer, for the theist, since God and His thoughts are already in the picture. Perhaps it is the idea of something being non-spatially "in" a material object that is behind the Queerness Worry. But here we arrive at a kind of trade-off with our objector. Recall that there are universals. Universals are multiply-instantiable—they can be had by more than one particular. But, if universals are spatially-located where their concrete particulars are, then one and the same object would be multiply located. But this possibility is (to say the least) highly counterintuitive. Rather, our everyday experience of spatial objects supports the following axiom, called the "axiom of localization" by Reinhardt Grossmann: "No entity whatsoever can exist at different places at once or at interrupted time intervals."[22] Hence, it is reasonable to conclude that universals are not spatially "in" the concrete objects that have them. If such considerations aren't helpful, one can simply follow J. P., who thinks that Platonism regarding properties requires a constituents approach to adequately solve the problem of individuation, and so too the notion of being "in" a substance non-spatially.[23] It is just a cost of an otherwise fruitful metaphysical theory. We conclude that the Queerness Worry isn't insurmountable and the benefits of adopting a non-spatial sense of "in" far outweigh any putative costs to the overall picture in terms of queerness.

The second worry about the overall picture thus erected has to do with the conjunction of theism with Platonism. According to traditional theism, God is the creator of all reality distinct from Himself. According to traditional Platonism, abstract objects exist independently, and thus as uncreated necessary beings. Traditional theism and traditional Platonism are obviously at odds with each other, and their conjunction leads to incoherency. Let's call this the *Incoherence Worry* regarding Platonic theism. Can the Incoherence Worry be avoided? One natural move is to bring the Platonic horde into the realm of God's creative activity: God is the creator of all abstract objects distinct from Himself. This is a move that many find initially attractive but ultimately unworkable because it simply relocates the incoherency. Here's how: If God is the creator of all abstract objects, then God is the creator of those abstract objects that He Himself has. But then God is the creator of His own nature (i.e., His properties such as *being all-powerful, being all-knowing, etc.*). But how can God create His own nature unless He already has a determinate nature (with all the requisite abilities and powers)?[24] And we are off on a vicious explanatory circle from which many think there can

be no escape. God pulls Himself up by His own bootstraps! We think that the so-called bootstrapping worry can be avoided for the Platonic theist.[25] Recall, as creator, God is the creator of all properties *distinct* from Himself, not all properties whatsoever. Thus, it is open to the theist to endorse the claim that God and God's properties exist *a se* and it is all other properties that are created by God. Thus, the Incoherency Worry can be set aside.[26] The Platonic Theist can have it all—an attractive theory of the mind-language-world nexus and a fully sovereign creator of all distinct reality, including those members of the Platonic horde that are not part of God (or God's mental life).[27]

THE EXPLANATORY POWER OF PLATONIC THEISM

J. P. is a Platonist regarding abstract objects, and a realist regarding universals. Nominalism, by way of contrast, holds that there are no abstract objects, only concrete objects. Further, such concrete objects are not multiply instantiable. There are no universals. There are brown dogs, but not the *abstract* property *being brown*, a *shareable* property that is possibly instantiated by dogs, men, and trees; there are tables and chairs with the same number of legs, but not *abstract shareable* numbers; and so on. Nominalism is not to be understood necessarily as the rejection of properties, relations, propositions, possible worlds, and so on. Rather, what is required of those who believe in such entities is that they think of them as particular (i.e., non-multiply instantiable) concrete objects.[28] In this last section, we turn to the rich explanatory power J. P.'s view of the world offers, over and against nominalism. We shall argue for the superiority of Platonic realism (hereafter "realism") over nominalism by highlighting phenomena within various academic disciplines—mathematics, biology, political science, literature, and theology—and showing how realism best explains the phenomena in question.

First, let us consider issues within the discipline of mathematics. Note the sentence "2+2=4." How should the numerals 2 and 4 be understood ontologically? What are the + and = functions to be identified with? What grounds the necessity of the truth of the sentence "2+2=4"? For the realist, mathematical objects (e.g., numbers, sets, functions) truly exist and can be multiply instantiated in (say) the many young minds of an elementary math class. Furthermore, numbers can stand in relations to one another, and these relations are universals. Hence there is an ontological grounding for the objectivity of mathematical theories. However, for the nominalist, there are only numerals (individual markings on

a page) and thus mathematical "truths" do not exist per se, to be discovered, but rather are "useful fictions" developed by a community of individuals. In this case mathematics actually is sociology—the study of how social groupings come to use various symbols in ways meaningful to them. Yet our intuitions incline us to say, for example, that the Pythagorean Theorem was discovered, not invented. The rich explanatory power of realism supports this intuition.

The same is true in the field of biology. Realism grounds the objectivity of the biological taxonomy in the fixed natures possessed by members of a natural kind. Of course, the nominalist has offered other groundings for the taxonomy (according to genotypic or phenotypic similarities), but all such attempts to date appear to fail.[29] Furthermore, realism better explains what we observe in the development of biological organisms. While all cells in an organism's body are the same, they are "directed" to play different functions in the context of the whole organism. Some become blood vessels, others fingernails, and still others brain neurons. The realist has a ready explanation: there is a nature that is "in" the particular and is directing the parts in certain ways to fully realize its telos as a member of that species (for instance, to be a fully mature human, dog, or gazelle). The nominalist counters by arguing that DNA performs this function. However, this merely pushes the problem back one step. DNA is composed of an ordering of specific instances of nucleotide types (A, C, G, and T types). It is the relation between these types that makes DNA what it is. Yet these relations appear to be universals, in which case the nominalist can't appeal to them in offering an explanation. At best, on nominalism, such relations resemble each other, but the nominalist is left without an explanation for why such resemblance relations obtain. Realism has a nice answer: resemblance reduces to identity—the relations that ground DNA are universal relations. Again, realism is explanatorily superior to nominalism in explaining the reality of the natural kinds found in nature as well as their teleological function.[30]

Next, consider political science, which is concerned with the proper ordering and governance of civil society. A central notion in the American Experiment is that of "inalienable human rights." But what are these, and how are they grounded? The realist is able to answer that each person is intrinsically equal and valuable due to a shared human nature—the universal *humanness* shared by all particular humans regardless of ethnicity, class, religion or any other demarcation. On the basis of this objective, shared nature, the State is required to treat

all citizens as equals. This not only forms the basis of America's commitment to equality, but grounds our moral outrage at human right abuses in other countries as well, such as is currently the case in Darfur. But the nominalist has no such grounding. With the rejection of a shared nature comes an inability to ground universal, equal rights based on anything shared by all members of the State (or world). All that is left is to define social identity and therefore value in terms of some other unifier: ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, etc. Ultimately, society is divided along these lines, with each community seeking to raise its status and obtain value and thereby freedoms and protections in virtue of these defining characteristics. Yet, without the common ground afforded by realism, the result is civic unrest and "power plays" among the various identity groups. Again, realism provides a better way, providing a sure grounding to provide for the common good—the good for all in virtue of being human—rather than promote what is good for one group at the expense of what is good for another group.

Many of the same points made above apply to issues in the fields of literature and biblical studies. For the realist there is meaning in the text due to the existence of multiply instantiable propositions, and by study of the text we can come to have those propositions in our minds, and thus the meaning in the text, which was also the meaning (the same propositions) in the mind of the author. For the nominalist, this is not possible given her metaphysic. Thus, she can only bring her meaning to the text. As Derrida said, "The absence of a transcendental signified extends the domain and the play of significations infinitely."[31] In the words of Nietzsche, "There are no facts, only interpretations."[32] From this follows the "Hermeneutic of Suspicion" and deconstructionism that has come to define postmodern literary studies as of late. Again, the implications for the study of literature, including the Bible, are far-reaching.

Lastly, these views have important implications in theology. For example, a central doctrine of orthodox Christianity is the humanity of Jesus. Philippians 2:7 states that Jesus "made himself nothing, by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness" and Romans 1:3 reads: "regarding his Son, who as to his earthly life was a descendent of David." Yet how is this to be understood? The realist has a ready explanation: Jesus truly took on something real—*humanness*—the very same nature all other humans possess. His sharing this nature, a property multiply-exemplified in all individual persons, is what made Him truly, deeply and fully human. This not only makes better sense of biblical teaching

and creedal summaries, but grounds how Jesus is able to fully sympathize with us—He, too, is fully human, exactly like we are, and therefore experienced human life exactly like we do. The humanity of Christ is much harder for the nominalist to explain while remaining theologically orthodox. A nominalist could argue that the human Jesus is not important, but rather what is important is the "Christ of Faith," as liberal theology holds. Or the nominalist could argue that Jesus was not truly human at all, but only "appeared" human, as the Gnostics argued. But these alternatives depart from clear biblical teaching and the historic creeds of the Faith. At best, the nominalist could argue that Jesus had His own unique property "humaness$_1$" which is adequately similar to the individual "humanesses" all other humans have ("humaness$_2$" humaness$_3$" etc.) to make Him human. But this merely postpones the problem, for how then are all of these individual humannesses related to one another in nontrivial ways? And therefore again, how did Christ truly share in our humanity? By our lights, the realist answer seems to be the best explanation of these facts about Jesus.[33]

Much more could be said, but we believe this suffices to show the implications of adopting a realist or nominalist metaphysic in relationship to a wide range of academic disciplines. It is our opinion that the Platonic realism J. P. espouses is vastly superior to nominalism in both its internal integrity as well as its efficacy in making sense of a number of important issues in more than a few disciplines. For these reasons, we embrace and promote this realist ontology as well.

Notes

1. William Lane Craig & J. P. Moreland, *Philosophical Foundations for a Christian Worldview* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 173.
2. J. P. Moreland, *Universals* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001), 134–39.
3. Ibid., 139.
4. See also Peter van Inwagen, "Being, Existence, and Ontological Questions," *Metametaphysics: New Essays on the Foundations of Ontology*, eds. David Chalmers, David Manley & Ryan Wasserman (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2009), 477.
5. Moreland, *Universals*, 32–33.
6. See Peter van Inwagen, "What is an ontological category?" *Metaphysics: Aristotelian, Scholastic, Analytic*, eds. Daniel Novotny, Lukas Novak, Prokop Sousedik & David Svoboda (Heusenstamm: Ontos Verlag, 2012), 15–17.
7. We do not think (nor would J. P.) that the universal class is a natural class, nor do we think it is an ontological category. Rather, the universal class is the sum of all existent things whatsoever and the primary ontological categories will be the highest natural class(es) which is (are) a subset of the universal class.

8. A *monocategorial ontology*, on the other hand, is an ontology that implies that there is only one primary ontological category—the universal class. See Peter van Inwagen, "Relational vs. Constituent Ontologies," *Philosophical Perspectives* 25 (2011): 389.
9. See Craig & Moreland, *Philosophical Foundations*, 184.
10. J. P. Moreland, "A Response to a Platonistic and to a Set-theoretic Objection to the Kalam Cosmological Argument," *Religious Studies* 39 (2003), 376.
11. Van Inwagen, "What is an ontological category?" 19.
12. Moreland, "A Response to a Platonistic and to a Set-theoretic Objection to the Kalam Cosmological Argument," 374.
13. As a Platonist, J. P. follows Reinhardt Grossmann in making a distinction between "the world" and "the universe." The universe is, "the totality of matter and energy in existence… one giant spatio-temporal whole." See Grossmann, *The Existence of the World* (London: Routledge, 1992), 8. Still, there are things that are not part of the universe in this sense: they are not spatio-temporal parts. Hence, there are things that exist which are not part of the universe, rather they belong to the world. The world is what we have called the universal class—every existent, whether it belongs to the universe, belongs to the world. See also Craig & Moreland, *Philosophical Foundations*, 183–85.
14. Peter van Inwagen, "Relational vs. Constituent Ontologies," *Philosophical Perspectives* 25 (2011): 389–405.
15. Nicholas Wolterstorff, "Bergman's Constituent Ontology," *Nous* 4 (1970): 109–34; and "Divine Simplicity," *Philosophical Perspectives* 5 (1991): 531–52.
16. Michael Loux, "Aristotle's Constituent Ontology," *Oxford Studies in Metaphysics* Vol. 2, ed. Dean Zimmerman (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2006), 207.
17. J. P. Moreland, "Exemplification and Constituent Realism: A Clarification and Modest Defense," *Axiomathes*, 23.2 (June 2013): 247–59.
18. George Bealer, "A Theory of Concepts and Concept Possession," *Philosophical Issues* 9 (1998), 268.
19. J. P. Moreland, "Exemplification and Constituent Realism: A Clarification and Modest Defense," 250.
20. Ibid., 251.
21. Ibid., 253–55
22. Reinhardt Grossmann, *The Existence of the World: An Introduction to Ontology*, 13.
23. After a lengthy argument against Wolterstorff and Armstrong, J. P. states: "If one accepts a realist construal of properties, then one must also embrace some type of individuator that is not a normal property (e.g., an impure property) or is not a property at all, or else the position collapses into moderate nominalism [as J. P. claims Wolterstorff's and Armstrong's accounts do]," *Universals*, 94–95. See also the essay in this volume by Timothy Pickavance.
24. There are other problems here as well, namely, it strains intuition to think that God or anyone else could be responsible for the nature He has, still some have argued thusly. See Thomas Morris and Christopher Menzel, "Absolute Creation," *American Philosophical Quarterly* 23 (1986): 353–62.

25. We think the most rigorous formulation of the bootstrapping worry can be found in Bergmann and Brower's, "A Theistic Argument against Platonism (and in Support of Truthmakers and Divine Simplicity," *Oxford Studies in Metaphysics* Vol. 2, ed. Dean Zimmerman (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2006), 223–57. Other incompatibility arguments can be found in William Lane Craig and Paul Copan, *Creation Out Of Nothing* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2004), 167–95; Matthew Davidson, "A Demonstration Against Theistic Activism," *Religious Studies* 35 (1999): 277–90; Scott Davison, "Could Abstract Objects Depend Upon God?," *Religious Studies* 27 (1991): 485–97; and Brian Leftow, "Is God An Abstract Object?," *Nous* 24 (1990): 581–98.
26. Granted, there are other issues that would need to be addressed, e.g., two important questions that remain are (1) Can God (or anyone else) create abstract objects? And (2) Is the notion of eternal causation possible and consistent with biblical orthodoxy? We think the answer to both questions is "yes." For more, see Paul Gould and Richard Davis, "Modified Theistic Activism," *Beyond the Control of God? Six Views on the Problem of God and Abstract Objects*, ed. Paul Gould (New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, forthcoming).
27. We think it is plausible to hold that some abstracta are to be located within God or God's mind (such as numbers, propositions, and concepts) and others are best kept in Plato's heaven (namely, properties and relations not essentially possessed by God). For more on this, see ibid.
28. See Gonzalo Rodriguez-Pereyra, "Nominalism in Metaphysics," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Fall 2011 Edition)*, Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2011/entries/nominalism-metaphysics/> for more on the realism/nominalism and abstract/concrete distinctions and their relation. As Rodriguez-Pereyra points out, one can be a nominalist in one sense (the denial of abstract objects) and still endorse universals, as the Aristotelian realist does.
29. See Stan W. Wallace, "In Defense of Biological Essentialism: A Reply to Sober et al.," *Philosophia Christi*, 4:1 (2002): 29–43.
30. For more see Richard J. Connell, *Substance and Modern Science* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988) and Etienne Gilson, *From Aristotle to Darwin and Back Again: A Journey in Final Causality, Species, and Evolution* (original English edition: Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984).
31. Jacques Derrida, *Writing and Difference*, tr. Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), 280.
32. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, tr. Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale, ed. Walter Kaufmann (New York, NY: Random House, Inc., 1968), 267.
33. We do not think this is the last word on the matter, however. Possibly, there are versions of nominalism that allow for common natures, even if not universal natures. To work out such a view, one would first have to distinguish different types of sameness, so that a nature such as *humanness* can be said to be *common to*, even if not identical for, all members of the same natural kind, and perhaps also to distinguish different types of individuals, say those capable of sharing a common nature and those which are not. It has recently been suggested that this was in fact Aquinas's view—a *via media* between Platonic realism and more austere versions of nominalism. See Jeff Brower, "Aquinas on the Problem of Universals," unpublished manuscript. For reasons stated above, we suspect that such moves, in the end, are more costly than Platonic realism. For on this view, the relation *being intrinsically the same* explains

human natures being similar, as well as (say) dog natures being similar, horse natures being similar, and so on. The relation *being intrinsically the same* is either a universal or it is not. If the relation is a universal, then there is no payoff in terms of ontological economy for such a nominalism. If it is not, it seems natural to think the relation is a brute fact, in which case it is more costly than realism in terms of explanatory power. For more on this see the essay in this volume by Rob Garcia.

Platonism *and the* Haunted Universe*

ROBERT K. GARCIA

We do not have to understand new things, but by dint of patience, effort and method to come to understand with our whole self the truths which are evident.

SIMONE WEIL[1]

If you want to go down deep you do not need to travel far; indeed you don't have to leave your most immediate and familiar surroundings.

LUDWIG WITTGENSTEIN[2]

Any culture which loses a commitment to the unseen world will ultimately degenerate.

J. P. MORELAND[3]

THROUGHOUT HIS CAREER, J. P. Moreland has invested a great deal of time and effort developing and defending a metaphysical thesis called Platonism. To those familiar only with his popular work, this might be surprising. After all, the scuttlebutt has it that Platonism is a posh piece of metaphysical speculation, a rather rococo knickknack on the top shelf of a worldview, maximally aloof from the concerns of everyday life. So why would Platonism, of all things, receive so much time and attention from a man so passionately devoted to the kingdom of God?

This is a far-reaching question, to be sure, and in this chapter I'd like to suggest at least the start of an answer. It is not the only answer, but I believe it is among the answers J. P. would give, and, indeed, it is the answer I find most satisfying. More-

over, it is an answer that speaks to the relevance of Platonism for the pursuit of a fully integrated life.

The relevance of Platonism is best understood within the context of J. P.'s broader aims as a Christian philosopher and, in particular, as a fundamental part of his critical engagement with philosophical naturalism (hereafter, simply "naturalism"). To disentangle these ideas, I will proceed as follows. In the next section, I will sketch naturalism, underscore its discord with Christian theism, and describe three lines of attack J. P. has mounted against naturalism. The third line of attack involves J. P.'s defense of Platonism; I will focus on this in the subsequent section. In the final section, I will tie things together by discussing how thinking about Platonism can catalyze integration.

NATURALISM

One of J. P.'s important philosophical contributions is his sustained critique of naturalism. According to J. P., naturalism has three distinct ingredients:[4]

(1) *the naturalist epistemic attitude*: claims not justified by scientific methodology are to be met with denial or extreme skepticism.[5]

(2) *the naturalist grand story*: all entities whatsoever—everything on a comprehensive Inventory of What There Is (hereafter, simply the "Inventory")—have come into existence by causal processes completely explainable in scientific terms.

(3) *the naturalist ontology*: the only kinds of things on the Inventory are the kinds of entities postulated by the best (current or future) scientific theories. Arguably, this means that there is nothing on the Inventory except spatio-temporal entities capable of entering into physical, causal processes.[6]

It should be clear that Christian theism and naturalism are at loggerheads. Or, they are in so far as Christian theism involves a commitment to (i) nonscientific sources of knowledge (e.g., special or natural revelation, natural theology, religious experience), (ii) the existence of a divine being whose existence cannot be explained, much less explained in terms of a causal process, and (iii), less uncontroversially, the existence of entities that are not essentially spatial and temporal (i.e., God, souls, angels). Thus, challenging naturalism is a crucial part of making a case for the reasonableness of Christian belief.

J. P. has advanced numerous challenges for naturalism. First, J. P. has made extensive contributions to natural theology, such as his development and defense of some of the traditional philosophical arguments for theism.[7] By providing arguments for the reasonableness of Christian belief, these contributions amount to an indirect indictment of naturalism. Second, and relatedly, J. P.'s groundbreaking work on the Argument from Consciousness[8] offers not only a defense of the genuine immateriality of the mind—a direct attack on naturalism—but also offers a powerful argument for theism. Third, J. P.'s robust defense of Platonism is an important contribution to our understanding of the metaphysics of properties; it is, moreover, an explicit attack on the naturalist ontology. In the next section, I will focus on Platonism and its bearing on naturalism.

THE PATH TO PLATONISM

The dispute between Platonism and naturalism is perennial. In fact, Plato himself describes it as an "interminable battle" (*Sophist*, $246_{A\text{-}C}$). Plato's choice of "interminable" was prescient, as it was succeeded by two thousand years of philosophical fracas. Indeed, it seems that a resolution to this dispute retreats from the advancing philosopher like a rainbow's end.[9] But what's the battle about, exactly? The Stranger in Plato's *Sophist* says it's a quarrel about reality: the "giants" have it that all reality is bodily and visible, whereas the "gods" have it that true reality consists in bodiless and invisible forms. This battle has many fronts, but I will focus on one: the perpetual dust-up between naturalists and Platonists concerning the existence and nature of *properties*.

Traditional disputes concerning the existence and nature of properties center around a constellation of questions about the character of ordinary objects. They include: We may suppose that the Inventory includes *charactered objects*, but, without double-counting, does it also include the *characteristics* of those objects? (I use *characteristics* and *properties* interchangeably.) If the Inventory includes a red apple and a hard sphere, must it also include *redness* and *sphericity*? And, if the Inventory includes both charactered objects and characteristics, how do they relate to one another? Is the sphericity of the ball in some sense a part or constituent in the ball? And, if sphericity is a constituent in the ball, is that property spatially and temporally located like the ball is? If two distinct objects are spherical, how many sphericities must there be to explain that—one or two?

The last question concerns the phenomenon of *attribute agreement*. In such

a case, we say that two objects have the same property, or are charactered in the same way. To say *that*, however, is not to say anything very controversial. To spawn philosophical fisticuffs we must ask what, if anything, *explains* attribute agreement; or, put differently, we must ask *what makes it the case* that, say, two objects have the same spherical shape. Platonism offers a plausible way of answering these questions. In the rest of this section I will outline a case for Platonism that has its source in J. P.'s work. The case advances in three steps. Each step is prompted by a unique question and involves offering various considerations supporting an affirmative answer to that question.

First Question: Must Properties Exist Per Se?

The first step is prompted by the First Question: *In order to explain attribute agreement and other character-related phenomena, must there exist properties per se, in addition to charactered objects and classes of charactered objects?* One tribe of metaphysicians—the *extreme nominalists*—answers with an out-and-out "No." On their view, the strict metaphysical truth is that there are no properties and, moreover, we don't need to postulate properties in order to provide an adequate account of character-related phenomena (or anything else). Apart from their shared allergy for properties, extreme nominalists make up a rather motley tribe. Some take character-related phenomena not to require an explanation at all; some think an explanation is in order, but disagree about what it looks like.

According to the *austere nominalist*, character-related phenomena either cannot or need not be explained. On her view, we needn't posit any entities besides concrete particulars in order to discharge whatever explanatory duties we might have concerning character-related phenomena. If we want a truth-maker for the sentence "This apple is red," we need only point to the apple itself, qua metaphysical simple. That is, to account for the character of the apple, we need only one explanatory resource: the apple itself, taken as a whole—that is, taken as a metaphysically unstructured, simple, entity. Pointing out that explanation must stop somewhere, the austere nominalist takes it to stop at the place where other theories begin: with ordinary facts about charactered objects. On her view, nothing is gained by trying to explain ordinary facts about character in terms of anything else—especially not in terms something so esoteric as universals or tropes (about which, see below). Instead, she takes facts about character to be primitive, or brute.

There are several standard objections to austere nominalism.[10] I'll mention

two. One objection says the view is unable to account for the truth of (true) sentences that deploy abstract singular terms. In brief, it goes as follows. Consider a sentence like "Courage is a moral virtue." The subject of the sentence appears to name a property—courageousness. And, arguably, no adequate paraphrase of the sentence can avoid naming this property.[11] Thus, if we accept the truth of the sentence—and we should—then we are committed to the entity named by its subject. A second and similar objection says that austere nominalism is unable to account for true sentences that appear to quantify over properties. For example: "Spiders share some of the anatomical features of insects."[12] This sentence (and any adequate translation of it) appears to quantify over *features*, and so by accepting its truth we are committing ourselves to properties. Thus, the standard objections to austere nominalism challenge its resources for providing an adequate account of sentences deploying abstract singular terms and sentences that appear to quantify over properties.

Slightly-less-exacting extreme nominalists are less sanguine about the prospects for foreswearing an explanation of character. Here, I'll rough out two general strategies. Each aims to explain character without postulating properties per se. The first strategy explains the character of an object in terms of how that object stands to another *individual* object, whereas the second explains the character of an object in terms of how that object stands to *classes* of objects.

The first strategy is shared by *predicate extreme nominalism* and *concept extreme nominalism*. The former takes an object to be charactered in virtue of a certain linguistic object (a predicate) being true of the object: a toy is spherical in virtue of the fact that the word *spherical* is true of the toy. The latter takes an object to be charactered in virtue of a certain mental object (concept) being satisfied by the object: a toy is spherical in virtue of the fact that the toy falls under the concept *spherical*.

This strategy is scuppered by several objections. Here's one: On pain of tacitly appealing to *types* of predicates or concepts, the strategy must involve an appeal to *token* predicates or concepts. But then the strategy appeals to a "grotesquely anthropocentric" ground for the character of objects.[13] For example, if the character of an electron is grounded in a *token* predicate/concept, then we get an incredible result: had our language/thought been just slightly different with respect to its predicates/concepts, the electron wouldn't have been negatively charged.

This brings us to the second strategy of the slightly-less-exacting extreme

nominalist, what we may call *set-theoretic extreme nominalism*. Here, character-related phenomena are explained in terms of classes (or sets) of objects. There are different versions of this strategy, but they share the following core interrelated ideas:

(1) It is in virtue of being a member of a class, or kind of class, that an object is charactered in the way(s) that it is.

(2) Attribute agreement amounts to comembership; that is, two objects are charactered in the same way in virtue of those objects being comembers of a class.

(3) Talking about the characteristics of objects or quantifying over a property amounts to talking about or quantifying over a certain set (a "property class") of ordinary objects.[14]

Two versions of set-theoretic extreme nominalism are *class extreme nominalism* (CEN) and *resemblance extreme nominalism* (REN). An important difference between these views concerns whether or not *resemblance* is supposed to play an explanatory role. On CEN it does not play a role; on REN it does.

According to CEN, resemblance does *not* explain character. Rather, the fact that two spherical objects resemble each other is explained by the fact that those objects belong to the same set—the set of all and only spherical objects. However, on this view, for *any* extensionally defined class of ordinary objects, we can aptly say that a unique property is shared by all and only its members. Of course, *every* class is extensionally defined. Thus, for any class of ordinary objects, we could aptly predicate a unique property of each of its members. This spells trouble. Consider these sets:

- *Electrons* = {all the electrons}
- *Hodgepodge* = {J. P.'s current Disney pass, my old bandana, Mike Erre's Duran Duran poster, and Tim Pickavance's brobdingnagian brain}

As J. P. notes, the problem for CEN is that it has two implausible implications: (i) there is a property uniquely shared by all and only the members of *Hodgepodge*, and (ii) *Electrons* and *Hodgepodge* are on par in that there is no account for what we would pre-theoretically describe as the difference between natural groupings (e.g., *Electrons*) and gerrymandered ones (e.g., *Hodgepodge*).

The problem of accounting for the difference between sets that "carve reality at its joints" and those sets that do not has been called the *Problem of Naturalness*.[15]

REN attempts to solve this problem by privileging a certain type of object-class, the so-called *resemblance class*. It begins by taking it to be a primitive fact that objects resemble each other to various degrees. On this view, resemblance is not explained; rather, it does the explaining. In particular, primitive resemblance allows a principled way of privileging some but not all object-classes. The privileged classes are the resemblance classes, where ϕ is a resemblance class if and only if:

(i) Each member of ϕ is an ordinary object;
(ii) each member of ϕ resembles every other member to some degree; and
(iii) no nonmember of ϕ resembles every member of ϕ to that degree.[16]

Thus, for example, *Electrons* is a resemblance class, as is the class of all red things. According to REN, two objects can be said to share a property if and only if they are comembers of a resemblance class. Thus, all exactly resembling spherical objects can be said to share a property, "sphericity."

REN faces serious and well-known difficulties.[17] Some stem from the identity condition for classes.[18] Where Γ and Σ name classes, $\Gamma = \Sigma$ if and only if anything that is a member of Γ is a member of Σ and vice versa. Thus, a class has its members essentially or necessarily. Let "*R*" stand for the class of all red objects. Given the identity condition for classes, it follows that the *number* of objects in *R* could not be other than it is—if *R* has exactly ten members then it is impossible that *R* have only nine members. But because REN is committed to the conditional that there are red objects only if *R* exists, it follows that there could not be one more or one less red object in the world. This and other implausible consequences serve to scuttle REN.

Let's take stock. We've been interrogating the tribe of extreme nominalists with the First Question and we've seen that each version of extreme nominalism faces significant objections.

These problems motivate the first step toward Platonism, an affirmative answer to the First Question. Those who so answer we may call *property-realists*. The label is apt because they agree about the *existence* and explanatory importance of properties. On their reckoning, properties exist and are among the fundamental entities that there are, and, moreover, properties play a crucial role in

any adequate account of reality. Property-realists disagree, however, concerning the *nature* of properties.

Second Question: Are Properties Shareable?

Perhaps the most important disagreement concerns how to answer the Second Question:

Given that properties exist, are they shareable? This query divides the tribe of property-realists into two camps. *Moderate nominalists* say "No." *Metaphysical realists* say "Yes."[19] The disagreement over shareability concerns whether or not multiple objects can simultaneously have one and the same property.

According to moderate nominalism—often called *trope theory*—properties are unshareable in that it is impossible for one and the same property to be simultaneously had by multiple objects. Unshareable properties are called *tropes*. If property F is a trope and object O has F at time *t*, then no other object has F at *t*. If the toy on the table is spherical, the sphericity of the toy is not the sphericity of any other spherical object. If there are two spherical toys on the table, there are two sphericity tropes—one for each toy. The fact that the toys are both spherical is grounded in the fact that they have exactly similar but numerically distinct tropes. On this view, attribute agreement involves the multiplication of properties, not the multiple instantiation of a single property.

The metaphysical realist disagrees. On her view, one and the same property *can* be simultaneously had by multiple objects, and, indeed, such literal property sharing is required for an adequate account of attribute agreement. Shareable properties are called *universals*. If properties are universals and the toy is spherical, the sphericity of the toy is the very same sphericity as the sphericity of every other spherical object. No matter how many spherical toys are on the table, there is exactly one sphericity—a universal shared by all those toys. The fact that the toys are all spherical is grounded in the fact that they share one and the same universal. On this view, attribute agreement does not involve the multiplication of properties, but the multiple instantiation, or sharing, of a single property.

Affirming metaphysical realism is the second step toward Platonism. This step is motivated by numerous considerations, including the conviction that an adequate account of character-related phenomena requires shareable properties. J. P., in fact, has mounted a career-long campaign against moderate nominalism and for metaphysical realism.[20] It is impossible to do justice to the details of his tren-

chant campaign here. But to give a sense for how universals fare better than tropes, I will sketch (and extend) a traditional line of criticism against moderate nominalism. The objection concerns the ontological status of exact resemblance.

A central doctrine of moderate nominalism is that some tropes exactly resemble each other. This is important because it underwrites an account of resemblances between ordinary objects. For example, two apples are red because they each have a constituent trope—redness$_1$ and redness$_2$—such that those tropes are numerically distinct but exactly resemble each other. Worries about exact resemblance have been at the center of the dispute concerning moderate nominalism. The most forceful concerns the ontological status of exact resemblance itself. Does each case of exact resemblance involve an exact resemblance trope? For example, should the moderate nominalist take the fact that redness$_1$ and redness$_2$ exactly resemble to involve a further relation trope—exact resemblance$_1$—that holds between redness$_1$ and redness$_2$? The problem is that there doesn't seem to be a good way to answer this question. Let's consider each option.

Option One: suppose there *are* exact resemblance tropes. On this option, there is an exact resemblance trope, R_1, which holds between redness$_1$ and redness$_2$. This raises a Euthyphro-like dilemma: Which of the following is the case?

(A) Redness$_1$ and redness$_2$ exactly resemble because there is an exact resemblance trope, R_1, which holds between them.

(B) There is an exact resemblance trope, R_1, which holds between redness$_1$ and redness$_2$ because they exactly resemble each other.

If the moderate nominalist opts for (A), then a vicious regress would seem to ensue. This sort of argument has its source in Bertrand Russell, and goes as follows.[21] The strategy represented by (A) seems to be a fully general one: if any two tropes exactly resemble, then their resemblance is grounded in a resemblance trope. Presumably, there will be numerous cases of exact resemblance, and so numerous exact resemblance tropes. Let's name two of them "R_1" and "R_2." But notice that a further case of exact resemblance holds between any two resemblance tropes. R_1 and R_2, for example, exactly resemble each other with respect to being resemblance tropes. And so the general strategy represented by (A) would require that the latter case of resemblance be grounded in a further resemblance trope, RR_1, which holds between R_1 and R_2. But then there will be numerous such higher order resemblance tropes, RR_1, RR_2, etc., for which the

general strategy will require further resemblance tropes, RRR_1, RRR_2, etc. This regress is apparently vicious. Thus, if the trope theorist holds that there *are* exact resemblance tropes, she should reject alternative (A) and deny that $redness_1$ and $redness_2$ exactly resemble *because* there is an exact resemblance trope, R_1, which holds between them.

This is alternative (B), on which an exact resemblance trope supervenes on its terms and the grounding relation does not generate a vicious regress. But (B), too, hits a snag. Notice that to reject (A) is to deny that the resemblance between $redness_1$ and $redness_2$ is grounded in anything distinct from either $redness_1$ or $redness_2$. This leaves the moderate nominalist with two options. Either their resemblance is grounded or it is not. If their resemblance *is* grounded, then it must be grounded in $redness_1$ and $redness_2$ themselves. The problem, however, is that for this to be the case, there must be something in the nature of $redness_1$ that is directed toward $redness_2$, and vice versa. Put differently, it would seem that the content of $redness_1$ must essentially involve something besides $redness_1$. But this would seem to be impossible since there is no universal—i.e., general—content in a trope. Hence, it would seem impossible for a trope to have content that is "directed" at all, much less directed toward anything outside of itself. Thus, it seems that if the trope theorist opts for (B), she must take it to be an ungrounded, primitive fact that some tropes exactly resemble and some do not. Moreover, she must take *every case* of exact resemblance between two tropes to be a distinct primitive fact. Because there is nothing "in" the nature of any trope that connects it with another trope, if there is such a connection in any given case, it will be a primitive fact. Thus, the trope theorist will have to take *every* such connection to be primitive. This means that the theory must postulate a distinct primitive fact for every pair of tropes that exactly resemble. This quickly leads to an untoward number of primitive facts: for each case of attribute agreement between ordinary objects, the moderate nominalist postulates a pair of exactly resembling tropes (one in each object). Thus, there will need to be a distinct primitive fact for every such case. In addition, it seems that such a view would fail to explain *any* significant phenomena of resemblance. This sticks alternative (B) with an exorbitant price.

In sum, there are two alternatives on Option One. The first, (A), is to take $redness_1$ and $redness_2$ to exactly resemble because there is an exact resemblance trope, R_1, which holds between them. We saw that this seems to generate a vicious regress. The second alternative, (B), is to hold that there is an exact resemblance

trope, R_1, which holds between redness_1 and redness_2 because they exactly resemble each other. We saw that this view seems to saddle moderate nominalism with an untoward number of primitive facts.

So much for Option One. Option Two: suppose there *are not* exact resemblance tropes. Unfortunately, Option Two fares no better than alternative (B) above. While it would avoid the postulation of explanatorily superfluous resemblance tropes, it would still seem to saddle the view with an untoward number of primitive facts. The argument here is the same as the one given concerning (B); namely, there is nothing "in" the nature of any trope that connects it with another trope, so if there is such a connection, it will be a primitive fact. And, there will be a distinct primitive fact for every pair of tropes that exactly resemble. So it seems that the final option is also unsatisfactory.

The metaphysical realist takes the general lesson here to be the following. The attempt to avoid shareable properties (universals) by multiplying exactly similar nonshareable properties (tropes) leads to either resemblance regresses or an untoward number of primitive facts concerning resemblances between properties. In neither case do we have an adequate explanation for attribute agreement and other character-related phenomena. By taking properties to be universals we can forestall resemblance regresses and avoid untoward primitives. Moreover, taking properties to be universals provides a satisfying and straightforward account of attribute agreement and other relevant phenomena.[22]

These considerations motivate an affirmative answer to the Second Question, that is, the postulation of shareable properties, or universals. This postulation is the second step toward Platonism.

Third Question: Are Universals Spatio-temporally Located?

The third and final step involves resolving a dispute among metaphysical realists concerning how to answer the Third Question: *Are universals spatio-temporally located?* The issue here concerns whether a universal is located where and when its bearer is located. For example, if a spherical toy is on the table right now, is the universal sphericity also on the table right now? One prominent metaphysical realist, David Armstrong, takes universals to be located. On his view—immanent realism—sphericity *is* on the table, and this is because sphericity is a spatio-temporal *constituent* in the ball. Against Armstrong, however, Moreland has argued that while sphericity is a constituent in the ball, it is *not* a spatio-temporal constituent.

On J. P.'s view, a universal is metaphysically "in" an object, but this does not mean that the property is located where and when the object is.[23] Among the arguments J. P. has deployed for his view, I will mention one that expresses a traditional worry about universals. As we will see, the worry incriminates Armstrong's view but not Moreland's.

To see the worry, suppose there are two spherical toys on the table, toy-1 and toy-2. Suppose also that toy-1 is stationary and toy-2 is rolling away from toy-1. According to metaphysical realism, there is exactly one sphericity, and both toys have it. On Armstrong's view, sphericity is located where each sphere is located. So, sphericity is wholly located both where toy-1 is and where toy-2 is. But, given that toy-2 is rolling away from toy-1, on Armstrong's view it follows that sphericity is moving away from itself. And, it follows that sphericity is simultaneously both stationary and moving. These kinds of results are frequently taken to be an unacceptable, perhaps even absurd, consequence of metaphysical realism. And, they are consequences of Armstrong's view. They are not, however, consequences of J. P.'s view. On his view, sphericity is not, strictly speaking, located anywhere. To be sure, each toy has it, and the fact that each toy has it explains why each toy is spherical. But properties are not had in a way that requires their being spatio-temporal located. This traditional worry is one of several motivations for taking the final step towards Platonism. Doing so involves affirming that while properties exist and are shareable, they are not located in time and space. It is because of this final step that Platonism and naturalism are at loggerheads.

PLATONISM AND THE FULLY INTEGRATED LIFE

I'll conclude with a few thoughts on how Platonism might contribute to the fully-integrated life.[24] Pursuing a fully integrated life requires a *habit of mindfulness*. I say *habit* of mindfulness because integration, much like physical health, is not something you achieve once and for all. Rather, it is something you regularly pursue or maintain. And, like physical health, the pursuit of integration is best facilitated by habits—regular activities done with increasing facility and skill. I say habit of *mindfulness* because the sort of habit required is one that involves a concerted effort at paying attention. We pay attention to many different things in our lives—often all at once: the time, the weather, our text messages, our email, our kids. According to Beckwith and Moreland, the pursuit of a fully integrated life requires habitually paying attention to two interrelated dimensions of integration:

- *Conceptual integration* requires paying attention to your beliefs and how they accord with each other. This involves blending and unifying our theological beliefs with other important and reasonable ideas "into a coherent, intellectually satisfying Christian worldview."[25]

- *Personal integration* requires paying attention to your actions and how they accord with your beliefs. Here "we seek to live a unified life, a life in which we are the same in public as we are in private, a life in which the various aspects of our personality are consistent with each other and conducive to a life of human flourishing as a disciple of Jesus."[26]

Platonism is relevant for both dimensions of integration. Because there is value in understanding God's creation, Platonism promises to enrich our conceptual integration by offering a powerful account of what structures and unifies creation. This is not to deny that there are important questions concerning whether Platonism *can* be unified with core theistic doctrines (see, for example, the chapter by Gould & Wallace in this volume). Instead, it is the importance of conceptual integration that requires us to take those questions seriously.

Platonism is relevant for personal integration because it can bolster a theism-friendly plausibility structure. According to Beckwith and Moreland, a plausibility structure is the set of ideas a person is willing to entertain as possibly true.[27] Plausibility structures are crucial for personal integration because "individuals will never be able to change their lives if they cannot even entertain the beliefs needed to bring about that change."[28] By considering the case for Platonism, we can facilitate personal integration by improving our plausibility structures. In so far as the case leads you to entertain the possibility that Platonism is true, it leads you to entertain the possibility that there is more than the space-time realm. Moreover, it can lead you to entertain the possibility that there are unseen realities with which we enjoy a more intimate form of closeness than spatio-temporal proximity. As J. P. once enjoined us:

> You must become aware that the unseen world shows up and leaves all the time, and if redness can do it, so can God. God is not a property or a universal, for properties and universals cannot just show up anywhere, (redness cannot show up in the dark), but God can.[29]

In this way, the case for Platonism can bolster a theism-friendly plausibility

structure. Notice that the case can do this even if you ultimately reject Platonism!

Platonism is relevant for personal integration in another way. Atheism, in its colloquial sense, seems to be not merely the denial of this or that divine being, but, rather, the affirmation that the beings of the spatio-temporal realm either exhaust reality (there is nothing else) or completely explain reality (there is nothing more fundamental). As Dallas Willard notes, "Atheism in the contemporary world draws most of its motivation from a desire to *tame* or to *naturalize* reality."[30] Willard goes on to make the following point: Although a standard fine-tuning argument for theism may not suffice to establish the truth of theism, it can still show that "there is something more than the physical or 'natural' universe, something of very impressive proportions. It is something quite different from the physical world in character and something from which the physical derives its existence and nature."[31] It can show that we have a "haunted universe on [our] hands."

Willard introduces the notion of a haunted universe to capture the broadly religious significance of the fact that the universe is fine-tuned. It would seem, however, that there could be other haunting considerations that, while falling short of establishing theism, should make an atheist ill at ease in our universe. Thus, I propose the following more general condition on haunting:

> **Haunted**: A universe is haunted if some *H* (or *H*s) exist such that *H* is (or the *H*s are) non-spatio-temporal and, in some way, explains or grounds something which is spatio-temporal.

If Platonism is true, then the universe—the space-time realm—is ontologically haunted. An atheist should feel less at home in a Platonist universe than in a non-Platonist one. Put differently, on the above understanding of atheism, the case for Platonism makes atheism less plausible than it otherwise would be. That is, a plausibility structure that can entertain the possibility that Platonism is true is, all things being equal, a structure on which theism is more plausible than atheism.

Notes

* My years at Talbot as J. P.'s student were some of the most deeply formative of my life. Without his teaching, wisdom, encouragement, and friendship, I would never have succeeded as a philosopher and I do not know how I could have weathered the many storms that have come my way. With such an immeasurable debt of gratitude, I can only hope to discharge it by striving to be as good a philosopher, teacher, and friend to my students as J. P. has been to me.

1. Simone Weil, *Gravity and Grace* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1987), 150.

2. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 50.
3. J. P. said this in a 1994 lecture for his Metaphysics seminar at Talbot School of Theology.
4. J. P. Moreland, "Naturalism and the Ontological Status of Properties," *Naturalism: A Critical Analysis*, eds. William Lane Craig and J. P. Moreland (London & New York: Routledge, 2000), 67–109.
5. Ibid., 73.
6. For J. P.'s arguments, see J. P. Moreland, "Searle's Biological Naturalism and the Argument from Consciousness," *Faith and Philosophy* 15 (1998): 68–91; and J. P. Moreland, "Should a Naturalist Be a Supervenient Physicalist?," *Metaphilosophy* 29 (1998): 35–57.
7. See, for example his *Scaling the Secular City* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1997) and *The God Question* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2009).
8. J. P. Moreland & Scott Rae, *Body & Soul* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), and especially his *Consciousness and the Existence of God: A Theistic Argument* (London: Routledge, 2008).
9. I adopt this analogy and phrasing from N. T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 390.
10. For further discussion, see Michael Loux, *Substance and Attribute* (Dordrecht, Holland: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1978), chap. 4, and John Carroll and Ned Markosian, *An Introduction to Metaphysics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), chap. 9.
11. For arguments, see Michael Loux, *Metaphysics: A Contemporary Introduction*, 3rd ed. (New York and London: Routledge, 2006), 57f.
12. This example is part of Peter van Inwagen's argument for properties: "A Theory of Properties," *Oxford Studies in Metaphysics*, Volume 1, ed. Dean Zimmerman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 114. True sentences like this one also pose problems for William Lane Craig's nominalism.
13. Keith Campbell, *Abstract Particulars* (Oxford and Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell, 1990), 18.
14. David Manley, "Properties and Resemblance Classes," *Noûs* 36.1 (2002): 75.
15. Ibid., 76.
16. This definition of a resemblance class is a modified version of one offered by David Manley in Ibid., 77.
17. For discussion see J. P. Moreland, *Universals* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001), chap. 2 and Michael Loux, *Substance and Attribute*, chap. 3.
18. The objection has its source in Nicholas Wolterstorff, *On Universals: An Essay in Ontology* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 175–76.
19. I suspect J. P. would balk at my characterization of moderate nominalists as property-realists. And, nothing hangs on how we label these views. The label, however, seems apt, since moderate nominalists *are* realists about properties, though they are *not* realists about universals. For more see J. P. Moreland, "How to Be a Realist in Nominalist Clothing," *Grazer Philosophische Studiens* 39 (1991): 75–101; and J. P. Moreland, *Universals*, chap. 3.
20. For a representative example of J. P.'s case against moderate nominalism and for metaphysical realism, see *Universals*, chaps. 3–5.

21. In this paragraph, I am summarizing Chris Daly's construal of Russell. See Daly, "Tropes" in *Properties*, ed. by D. H. Mellor and Alex Oliver (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 140–59.
22. For more, see J. P. Moreland, "Resemblance Extreme Nominalism and Infinite Regress Arguments," *The Modern Schoolman* 80 (2003): 85–98.
23. See *Universals*, 83–96. For a recent (and excellent) discussion of how property can be "in" something non-spatially, see J. P. Moreland, "Exemplification and Constituent Realism: A Clarification and Modest Defense," *Axiomathes* 23.2 (June 2013): 247–59.
24. For an excellent discussion of how *metaphysics in general* can contribute to integration, see Garrett Deweese, *Doing Philosophy as a Christian* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2011), especially chapter 5.
25. Frank Beckwith and J. P. Moreland, "Series Preface: A Call to Integration and the Christian Worldview Integration Series," in Garrett Deweese, *Doing Philosophy as a Christian* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2011), 9.
26. Ibid., 10.
27. Ibid., 18. For more on the nature and importance of plausibility structures, see Moreland's *Love Your God with All Your Mind: The Role of Reason in the Life of the Soul* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1997), 75f.
28. Ibid.
29. J. P. said this in a 1994 lecture for his Metaphysics seminar at Talbot School of Theology.
30. Dallas Willard, *Knowing Christ Today* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2009), 109.
31. Ibid.

Individuation *and* Incarnation[1]

TIMOTHY PICKAVANCE

SUPPOSE YOU'RE A Platonist: you think that properties (features, attributes, whatever you like to call them) are universals and thus can be shared, can be had (exemplified, whatever) by more than one substance.[2] Suppose further that you're a **Constituent Ontologist**: you think that properties enter into the being of the substances that have them; that the properties of a substance somehow constitute it by being non-mereological parts of it; that by saying what properties a substance has, you thereby say what the substance is (at least in part).[3] These two commitments are generally thought to give rise to a certain problem: the problem of individuation (for short, **The Problem**). **The Problem** is to give an account of what makes a substance the substance that it is. That is, **The Problem** is to give an account of what makes a substance *one* and to give an account of what distinguishes substances from one another.

As it happens, J. P. Moreland has been one of the central players in the dispute about **The Problem**. Here is how he sets it out. Consider the following three claims:

Bundle Theory: The only constituents of objects are their properties.

Platonism: Properties are universals and therefore are numerically identical in their instances.

The Principle of Constituent Identity (PCI): If substance *a* and substance

b have all the same constituents, then *a* is numerically identical to *b* (that is, *a just is b*).

Bundle Theory, **Platonism**, and **PCI** together entail the following:

The Identity of Indiscernibles (IOI): If substance *a* and substance *b* have all the same properties, then *a* is numerically identical to *b* (that is, *a just is b*).[4]

The implication isn't hard to see.[5] Given **Platonism**, if *a* and *b* are both red, say, then the one universal RED is instantiated by both *a* and *b*. *a* and *b* thus share a constituent, namely the universal RED. Suppose, further, that *a* and *b* share *all* their properties (the "if" half—that is, the "antecedent"—of **IOI**). Then, by similar reasoning, **Platonism** entails that *a* and *b* share *many* constituents, namely the universals that are the properties they instantiate. By **Bundle Theory**, it follows that these universals are *a*'s and *b*'s *only* constituents. So by **PCI**, *a* is numerically identical to *b*; that is, *a just is b*. And this conclusion is the "then" half—that is, the "consequent"—of **IOI**. So, given **Platonism**, **Bundle Theory**, and **PCI**, *if a* and *b* share all their properties, *then a* is numerically identical to *b*. Which is to say, if **Platonism**, **Bundle Theory**, and **PCI** are true, then so is **IOI**. The former three entail the latter.

So far so good. We can now give an account of what makes a substance the substance that it is. In particular, **IOI** suggests that a substance's properties individuate it. What makes a substance the substance that it is, what distinguishes any given substance from all the others, is that substance's properties. Numerical difference and qualitative difference go hand in hand. You can't have one without the other, and when you have one, you get the other too.

THE PROBLEM IS A *PROBLEM*

Trouble is—and we're now up against a way in which **The Problem** is a *problem*—**IOI** is very likely false.[6]

There are good reasons to think that distinct but qualitatively indiscernible substances are possible.[7] As a start, we can at least imagine a scenario in which there are two indiscernible substances. We might, for example, imagine a scenario in which there are two homogenous iron globes which are equivalent in size and shape, whose parts can be put in one-to-one correspondence, and so on. We can further stipulate that the only physical objects that exist are these globes, their parts, and, if there be such things, objects composed of the globes and their parts. We can

at least coherently imagine such a scenario. And our ability to imagine a scenario is evidence that the scenario is indeed possible: absent a reason to think otherwise, we ought to believe that this scenario is possible, that the world could have turned out this way, because we can imagine it having turned out this way. Put another way, our ability to coherently imagine this scenario is evidence that God might've made just this kind of world. If He had done, there would've been two qualitatively indiscernible objects. **IOI** therefore is false.[8]

We should dispatch with two strategies for resisting this argument. Both attempt to allow for possibilities like the one just sketched without conceding that they make trouble for **IOI**. Both do this by insisting that there are, contrary to initial appearances, qualitative differences between, for example, our two iron globes. To get clear on the proposals, we'll see how they work on our homogeneous globe possibility. It will help if we give the two globes names: "Globea" and "Globeb."

First strategy: insist that a certain kind of relational property individuates Globea and Globeb. For example, suppose Globea and Globeb are separated by one kilometer. Then Globea has the property of *being one kilometer from Globeb*, a property Globeb does not have; and Globeb has the property of *being one kilometer from Globea*, a property Globea does not have. Therefore, Globea and Globeb do not have all the same qualitative properties and are therefore not qualitatively indiscernible.

This first strategy faces at least two problems. First, these types of relational properties seem to be possessed *in virtue of* the relations they correspond to. Take the property of *being one kilometer from Globeb*. Grant for now that Globea has this property. Even given that claim, it would seem that Globea has this property *because* it stands in the *one kilometer from* relation to Globeb. If this is true, though, Globea and Globeb must stand in the *one kilometer from* relation metaphysically (not temporally!) prior to Globea's having the property of *being one kilometer from Globeb*.

So what? Given the metaphysical priority claim, Globea and Globeb must exist metaphysically prior to Globea having the property of *being one kilometer from Globeb*. The reason is that token relation instances, like the token of the *one kilometer from* relation that holds between Globea and Globeb, presuppose their relata. Things cannot stand in relations, and thus token relation instances cannot exist, unless the relata thereby related already do.[9] But if Globea exists metaphys-

ically prior to standing in the *one kilometer from* relation to Globeb, and therefore exists metaphysically prior to having the property of *being one kilometer from Globeb*, then the latter cannot individuate Globea. Globea must be individuated in order to exist at all, and thus Globea must be individuated metaphysically prior to having the property of *being one kilometer from Globeb*.

The second problem with the first strategy stems from the fact that the types of relational properties in view here are contingent features of the objects that have them. This is a problem because what individuates a thing ought to be something that explains, at least in part, what it is to be *that very thing*. From this it follows that what individuates a substance *must* individuate that substance. For if we are to explain what it is to be *this very object*, the explanation cannot change from time to time or from possibility to possibility. To say otherwise produces absurdity. Consider, for example, the result of saying that two otherwise identical twins are individuated by their respective spatial relationships to a certain tree. Now imagine that the twins switch places. The feature that individuated the first twin now individuates the second, and vice versa. We have thereby severed the connection between individuation and identity, and thus guarantee that our account of individuation cannot (in part) explain *what it is* to be one twin rather than the other.[10] Given that the relational properties deployed by this first strategy are merely contingently possessed by substances, such relational properties cannot do individuative work.

So much for the first strategy.

Second strategy: go in for "haecceities," that is, primitive qualitative properties of being a *such-and-such* object. The idea here is that, for each (possible) object, there is a property of *being just that object*, a property that only that very object even *could* exemplify. If you think that there are haecceities in this sense, then you can say that Globea and Globeb have different properties because Globea exemplifies one haecceity—*Globeaness*, say, or maybe the property of *being Globea*—while Globeb exemplifies another haecceity—*Globebness*, say, or maybe the property of *being Globeb*. So long as *Globeaness* and *Globebness* are distinct (and given the above characterization of haecceities, they must be distinct), Globea and Globeb have different properties. Thus, they are not qualitatively indiscernible. **IOI** does not, then, require us to say they are one, and we are left with no counterexample to **IOI**.

The trouble here is understanding the sense in which haecceities can be

thought of as *qualitative*. Up to this point, we haven't directly addressed the very important question of what indiscernibility *is*. The time has come to do so, because it is the only way to see why the failure of haecceities to be qualitative matters to our discussion. So, we will proceed in two steps. First, we will consider why **Platonism** urges us to think of properties as qualitative. Second, we will consider why it is unlikely that haecceities are qualitative.

Platonism Urges Us to Think of Properties as Qualitative

The most natural way to find one's way to **Platonism** goes something like the following. First, you make some alarmingly mundane observations about the world, observations like, "Hey, look at all those *trees*," "I really like *playing baseball*," "I really like *orange* things," and so on. Then you notice something interesting about all these observations: each concerns a *type* of thing (tree, baseball game, the color orange, etc.). Further, these types are associated with the *resemblances* among things of that type or the *causal powers* possessed by things of that type.[11] Finally, it is this connection between types and resemblances or causal powers that leads us to use words like 'feature,' 'attribute,' '*quality*,' '*universal*,' and '*property*' in place of the word 'type.' Which is to say, **Platonism** is fundamentally motivated by a desire to explain the resemblances and causal powers of things by reference to their properties. And so, for the **Platonist**, there is a connection between one's view of properties and one's view of the qualities of things, where we understand qualitativeness in terms of resemblance and causal powers.[12] In light of all this, when the **Platonist** formulates **IOI**, she means to have in view the sorts of properties that are qualitative, that make for resemblance or causal powers. The notion of indiscernibility in play is that of *qualitative* indiscernibility. Properties that do not make for resemblance or causal powers are therefore irrelevant to the question whether *this* and *that* are indiscernible.

Haecceities Are Likely Not Qualitative

It's clear that haecceities cannot make for resemblances. Indeed, it is precisely this possibility that the introduction of haecceities was meant to prevent. Haecceities are, *ex hypothesi*, not the sort of property that more than one object can have. Therefore, they cannot be part of an account of some resemblance between two objects. Nor do haecceities seem like the sort of property that could make for causal powers. If there were causal powers conferred by haecceities, they would

have to be causal powers that only one object could even possibly possess. It is very unlikely that there are any such causal powers. Causal powers seem sharable. The best case scenario for proponents of haecceities is that they bear a significant burden to defend the claim that, for every substance, there is some causal power that only that object has, and that only it could even possibly have. No proponent of haecceities, of which I am aware, has even *attempted* to discharge this burden.[13] So it is clear that haecceities cannot make for resemblances, and unlikely that they make for causal powers. In which case, they are likely not qualitative.

Here, then, is where we stand. **Constituent Ontologists** who are also **Platonists** cannot be **Bundle Theorists**, for **Bundle Theorists** of this sort must, given **PCI**, commit to **IOI**. But **IOI** is very likely false because there could have been distinct but qualitatively indiscernible objects. It does no good to push back against the idea that these possibilities involve *indiscernible* objects by appealing to relational properties or haecceities; these "properties" cannot do the work they must do in this context. However, **Bundle Theory** is a very natural solution to **The Problem**. What to do?

SOLVING THE PROBLEM: BARE PARTICULARS

The way to go is to reject one of **Bundle Theory**, **Platonism**, or **PCI**.

By now, you'll know that J. P. would think it a bad idea to give up **Platonism**. I won't rehearse his reasons here, and we will proceed as if **Platonism** were true.

Further, **PCI** is quite plausible for those committed to **Constituent Ontology**. **Constituent Ontologists** maintain that one can say what a substance *is* by cataloguing its constituents.[14] If that's right, though, it's difficult to see how you could say what *two* substances are by offering but *one* such catalogue. If you've truly said what each substance *is* when you've produced the relevant catalogue, then substances and catalogues should be in one-to-one correspondence. Different substance, different catalogue. This is the thought that **PCI** is meant to express.[15][16]

Summing up: **IOI** is out, and **Platonism** and **PCI** are in. We must consider abandoning **Bundle Theory**. As it happens, this is the choice J. P. makes. In particular, J. P. appeals to "bare particulars" to solve **The Problem**.

What are bare particulars? First, they are *particulars*, and in that way are like you and me and all the substances about which we've been talking. Particularity is conceptually fundamental—we are at the limits of conceptual explanation here—so there's nothing more to say than to group bare particulars together with

other familiar objects that we count as particulars, and point out that they are, with respect to their particularity, in the relevant group. Second, though, bare particulars are *bare*. There are two dimensions of the bareness of bare particulars. They are bare in that they are not properties, which is to say that bare particulars do not characterize anything. No bare particular makes it the case that something other than itself has a certain feature: they do not ground character.[17] The second dimension of the bareness of bare particulars is that they are not themselves charactered by anything. This is where the difference between bare particulars and other, familiar particulars emerges: substances have character, whereas bare particulars do not.

However—this is going to sound strange—bare particulars do "have" properties. J. P. talks about this in a particularly helpful way. Consider (1):

(1) Elsie is a dog.
(1) is, according to J. P., "grounded in" (2):
(2) Elsie's bare particular, *b*, is "tied to" the property of *being a dog*.

But what does it mean to say that *b* is "tied to" this property? Well, according to J. P., this is to say that *b* exemplifies the property of *being a dog* in a "strict, philosophical" sense. This strict, philosophical sense of exemplification is unlike the way that the substance Elsie exemplifies that same property: Elsie has the property of *being a dog* as a constituent. Importantly, the property of *being a dog* gets to be a constituent of Elsie—and, as we will see shortly, thereby gets to *characterize* Elsie—precisely by being tied to *b*, Elsie's bare particular. So this relationship into which properties and bare particulars enter, the relationship J. P. calls strict, philosophical exemplification, is rightly dubbed as a type of *exemplification* because it is crucially connected to the fact that certain properties characterize substances. Since bare particulars exemplify properties, it's right to say that, in this sense, they "have" properties.

There is a vital point that cannot be, but often is, missed: the sense in which bare particulars have properties is not the sense of having a property that makes it the case that something is *charactered* by the relevant property. Constituent ontologists who argue themselves into a commitment to bare particulars ought to think that a property *P* characterizes some object *o* just in case *P* is one of *o*'s constituents, and that this constituent-whole relationship between properties and objects never happens with bare particulars. We can see this by thinking about

the natural approach to constituent ontology with bare particulars. Start with an ordinary substance, which clearly has certain characteristics; it is a charactered thing. One then accounts for that character by saying that the substance's characterizing properties are constituents of that substance. But then you run into **The Problem**, and you go in for bare particulars. You cannot then say that bare particulars have constituents as well, otherwise you'll have reinstated **The Problem** with respect to bare particulars. But bare particulars, given the logic of their introduction, must *solve* **The Problem**. (Otherwise, you shouldn't have gone in for them in the first place.) Thus, bare particulars never have constituents, and therefore don't have character.[18]

I should be clear about the way in which bare particulars offer a solution to **The Problem** for the **Platonist** committed to **Constituent Ontology**. What individuates substances from one another—what makes each *one* and distinguishes it from all the others—are bare particulars. Bare particulars are constituents of substances that, in keeping with **PCI**, supply a way to distinguish, for example, Globea and Globeb. *Ex hypothesi*, Globea's bare particular is not identical to Globeb's bare particular, and so despite that Globea and Globeb are indiscernible, one needn't concede that they are identical: happily, **IOI** can be false if bare particular theory is true. And, if J. P. is right, bare particular theory *is* true!

At any rate, a view of the metaphysics of the essential structure of substances emerges from all of this. The essence of a substance consists of a bare particular tied to one or more essential properties. A substance is *not* identical to its bare particular! I like to picture this view as in Figure 1, where the curved closed plane figure represents the "boundaries" of the substance's essence, "b" represents its bare particular, "E" represents its essential property (the generalization to many essential properties should be obvious), and the straight line represents the tied-to type of exemplification relation:

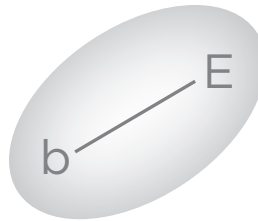

Figure 1

The elements contained within the boundaries are meant to be the constituents of the substance's essence. Figure 1 therefore displays, without appealing to a unique representational element, the idea that a substance's essential features are constituents of that substance; thus, it is right to say that, according to Figure 1, the substance is *characterized* by those essential features.

From here, there are difficult and delicate questions about the relationship between substances and their *accidental* features, features such that, if they are had by a substance, the substance *might nonetheless fail to have*. This is not the place to address those questions in detail.[19] However, we will shortly be in need of a view, and so I will suggest that we think about accidental features as in Figure 2, where the representational elements are as before, with the addition of an "A" to represent a substances accidental feature(s), and the dashed closed plane figure representing the "boundaries" of the substance as a whole:

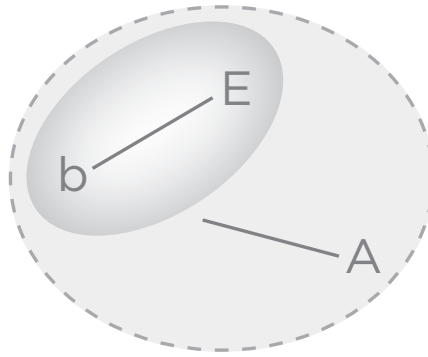

Figure 2

The idea here is that a substance's accidental features are tied to the substance's essence, rather than being tied to the substance's bare particular.[20]

BARE PARTICULARS AND THE INCARNATION

The time has come to switch gears a bit: I'd like to see whether all this fuss about a bare particular theory of substance can be put to work in articulating a coherent, orthodox theory of the incarnation of the Eternal Word. In particular, I'm interested in thinking about whether we can, using the picture we've developed of the nature of substance, get a grip on what it is for one substance to have two natures. We must, of course, think that the idea of one substance with two natures is coherent if we are to articulate an orthodox metaphysics of the incarnation.

According to the Council of Chalcedon (451), the Incarnate Deity was such a being, and Chalcedon sets certain boundaries about Christological orthodoxy. Here is an English translation of the Chalcedonian confession:

> We confess one and the same our Lord Jesus Christ . . . the same perfect in Godhead, the same in perfect manhood, truly God and truly man . . . acknowledged in two natures without confusion, without change, without division, without separation—the difference of natures being by no means taken away because of the union, but rather the distinctive character of each nature being preserved, and combining into one person and hypostasis—not divided or separated into two persons, but one and the same Son and only begotten God, Word, Lord Jesus Christ.[21]

We will focus here on how one person can have two natures in this way.

Before we directly address this question, I'd like to emphasize two interrelated points. First, I don't intend to offer a mandatory Christological picture, one an orthodox believer *must* accept if she is to maintain the Chalcedonian formulation. Indeed, I don't even pretend to be offering a full-blown Christological picture. There will be numerous issues on which the following will be silent. *I am only concerned to articulate one way for a single substance to have two distinct natures*. Second, I do not mean to offer the following partial Christological picture as one that I myself endorse. *The most I am willing to say is that this picture displays that the incarnation is not incoherent on the dimension the picture is addressing*. Putting these together, we can say that I am *not* proposing that the following picture is mandatory or true, but *am* proposing that the following picture is possibly true.

Enough with the hedging; let's get on to the picture.

A view of the Incarnate Son that is suggested by J. P.'s bare particular theory of substance goes like this. The Eternal Logos, prior to His incarnation, was a divine person in virtue of having an essence composed of a bare particular tied to the property of *being a divine person*.[22] Figure 3 is meant to capture this view, where "j" represents the Logos's bare particular and "D" represents the property of *being a divine person*, and where the rest of the representational elements are as in Figure 1.

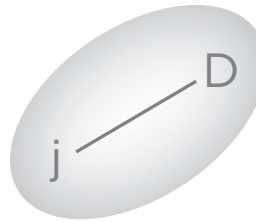

Figure 3

So far, so good.[23] The question now becomes how we ought to understand the change that occurs when the Pre-existent Son incarnates. One idea that might seem plausible is to think that, in the incarnation, the Eternal Logos takes on a human nature in virtue of j's coming to be tied to the property of *being a human*. Letting "H" represent this property, we find ourselves with the picture captured by Figure 4:

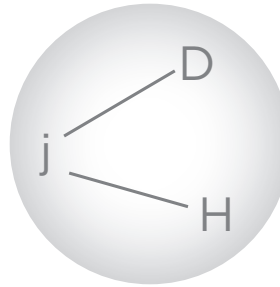

Figure 4

However, this picture will not do. The solid closed plane figure, recall, represents the "boundaries" of the represented substance's essence. The Incarnate Christ, however, is not essentially human, in the sense that it is possible for the Incarnate Christ to fail to be human. This should be uncontroversial, and has been in the history of Christian theology, precisely because the Incarnate Christ *just is* the Eternal Son. That is, the Incarnate Christ *is identical to* the Eternal Son. In taking on a human nature, the Eternal Son did not cease to be. The Incarnate Christ has a human nature, of course, but unlike with we *mere* humans, that human nature is not essential to Him. The upshot of this is that, if Figure 4 represents the Incarnate Christ's essence, then the Eternal Logos and the Incarnate Christ cannot be identical. Either the Eternal Logos ceased existing at the incarnation, or a fourth divine person came to be at the incarnation. Both

options are theological disasters, and so we must reject the picture represented by Figure 4.

One lesson of the foregoing is that, whatever happened with the incarnation, it cannot be taken to change the essence of the Eternal Son (that is, the essence of the Incarnate Christ). The Son's taking on a human nature *cannot* mean that the property of *being human* comes to be a constituent of the Son's essence. The property of *being human* must be accidental to the Son. Recall, then, Figure 2 above. It suggests the metaphysics of the incarnation pictured in Figure 5, where the representational elements are as above:

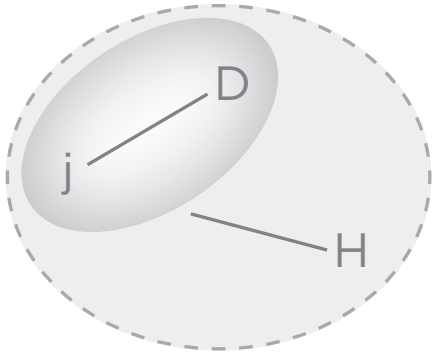

Figure 5

Here, the property of *being human* is tied to the essence of the Eternal Logos, rather than to His bare particular. This is as one would expect, given the view of accidental features pictured in Figure 2 and the argument above that the Incarnate Word must be only accidentally human.

It is worth emphasizing, however, that according to the view pictured in Figure 5, the Incarnate Word is *fully* human and *fully* divine but *one* person. The "distinctive character," sometimes translated "the property," of a divine nature, D, is preserved, and is had by the Incarnate Word in just the way that it is had by the pre-incarnate Eternal Logos, namely, by being tied to the Eternal Logos's bare particular, j. "The property" of a human nature, H, is preserved, in keeping with Chalcedon, and it is exemplified by the Incarnate Word. Thus, the view is *not* Apollinarian. Whatever comes along with having a complete human nature comes along in virtue of a thing's having the property of *being human*, that is, H. (Recall that H may represent a cluster of properties.) Nothing of what it takes to be human, therefore, is had by the Incarnate Word in virtue of His exemplifying

the property of *being a divine person*, that is, D. Further, the view is not Nestorian: there are not *two* persons here. This is where we have an obvious payoff of the discussion of individuation. There is only one bare particular, j, and so there is only one substance. The Incarnate Word is therefore not a human person, despite being fully human. Human persons are substances composed of a bare particular tied to H, whereas the incarnate Word is a divine person (a bare particular tied to D) who also has a fully human nature in virtue of exemplifying H contingently.[24] Summing up: this view of the Incarnation gives us one person with two unconfused natures, just as Chalcedon demands.

And so we see that not only do bare particulars give us a way to solve **The Problem**, but they also give us some traction in articulating a coherent, orthodox metaphysics of the Incarnation, at least with respect to the idea that one substance can have two natures. That, anyway, isn't a bad start!

Notes

1. I owe a debt to a great many people who have helped me think better about the subject matter of this paper; there are too many to list. But a special thanks to Robert Garcia and to the editors of this volume, Paul Gould and Rich Davis. My greatest debt, though, is to J. P. himself. He was my first philosophy professor, and he has been a constant source of knowledge, encouragement, and wisdom since the Fall of 2000, when I was twenty-one years old and in over my head during his metaphysics course. I wouldn't be half the philosopher I am today without his influence.

2. I should flag an assumption that will later come up against a challenge. The assumption is that if something is a universal, then it is shareable. (See the section on haecceities below.) Also, the word *Platonist* has a number of senses in the philosophical literature, many of which are more demanding than my usage here. So to be clear: all it takes to be a Platonist in the sense I have in mind is a belief in universals. None of my arguments will turn on the further demands that sometimes are associated with the word.

3. When I say "non-mereological," you might just think "non-physical": later, where I say "mereological," you might just think "physical." These aren't quite equivalences, but the differences won't matter for what I'm about here.

4. **Bundle Theory**, **Platonism**, **PCI**, and **IOI** are more or less terminological variants of the (1–4) one finds, e.g., in J. P. Moreland, "Theories of Individuation: A Reconsideration of Bare Particulars," *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* 79.3 (1998): 252; J. P. Moreland, *Universals* (McGill & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001), 141; and J. P. Moreland & Pickavance, "Bare Particulars and Individuation," *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 81.1 (2003): 2.

5. But see Gonzalo Rodriguez-Peryera, "The Bundle Theory is Compatible with Distinct but Indiscernible Particulars," *Analysis* 64.1 (2004): 72–81.

6. There is a second problem in this neighborhood: this account of individuation doesn't tell us what makes a substance *one*; we are lacking an account of a substance's *unity*. I think this problem is quite nasty for **Bundle Theorists**, but it has received less attention than **IOI**. Here on out, we'll ignore it.
7. My argument here bears close resemblance to arguments in Max Black, "The Identity of Indiscernibles," *Mind* 61.242 (1952): 153–64, and Robert Adams, "Primitive Thisness and Primitive Identity," *Journal of Philosophy* 76.1 (1979): 5–26.
8. "Homogenous iron globes aren't substances!" Maybe not, but it's easy to construct an analogous scenario, one that makes just this trouble for **IOI**, involving two examples of your favorite type of substance (except God, of course). My choice is doing no substantive work.
9. There is an exception to this rule, namely when the relations stood in are *constitutive* of the objects in question. (This points further to the connection highlighted between individuation and necessity in the second problem for this first strategy.) When the very existence and identity of a thing is in view, then relations needn't presuppose their relata. For example, J. P. thinks that existence is (roughly) the having of a property. This means that, when something comes to be, it thereby must come to have a property. Take, then, an object and its essential features, the features it couldn't fail to have. The exemplification relation between the object and those properties cannot presuppose the existence of the object, since in order to exist, the object must have those properties.
10. The mistake here is in thinking that the facts about an object which allow us to tell one thing from another are the facts about an object which make the object one. We should not confuse epistemology for metaphysics in this way.
11. Compare David Lewis, "New Work for a Theory of Universals," *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 61.4 (1983): 343–77.
12. There is *much* more to say, but this is no place to say it. Importantly, I'm talking about one way to arrive to **Platonism**, not more generally a way to find one's way to a theory of properties. Just as importantly, I'm more or less *stipulating* that there is a connection between qualitativeness, on the one hand, and resemblance and causal powers, on the other. I do, however, mean to motivate (not defend!) a connection between properties and qualitativeness. Further, I do not mean to say that properties have causal powers. All I wish to commit myself to is that we explain the causal powers that things have by appealing to their properties.
13. But see Timothy H. Pickavance, "The Natural View of Properties of Identity," in Robert Garcia (ed.), *Substance* (Munich: Philosophia Verlag, forthcoming).
14. Strictly speaking, one must also specify the interrelations among the substance's constituents. I'm ignoring this needless complication.
15. Rodriguez-Peryera, in his "The Bundle Theory Is Compatible with Distinct but Indiscernible Particulars," denies **PCI** as a way to make **Bundle Theory** and **IOI** compatible.
16. Still further, **PCI** is similar to an equally plausible principle having to do with mereological parts: if every mereological part of *a* is a mereological part of *b* and vice versa, then *a* is numerically identical to *b*. This principle has its detractors. But no one denies that it is *initially plausible*.
17. Readers familiar with the idea of "tropes" can note that this is one way in which tropes and bare particulars differ.

18. See Pickavance "Bare Particulars and Exemplification" (ms.) for more.
19. But see Pickavance (ms.).
20. This is not in keeping with certain things that J. P. says, though he has never directly addressed these issues in print.
21. Taken from Michael Murray and Michael Rea, "Philosophy and Christian Theology," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2012 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2012/entries/christiantheology-philosophy/>.
22. I will assume in this case, and also with Christ's humanity, that the essence of divinity and humanity consists in a single property. This is a simplifying assumption on which nothing of substance hangs.
23. Well, maybe. Some may be unhappy with the idea that the three Persons of the one Godhead are constituted by anything at all. I am not unsympathetic with this unhappiness; indeed, I myself would deny that bare particulars individuate the three Divine Persons. But for reasons that would go beyond the scope of this paper, I don't believe there is anything unorthodox in this idea.
24. To be (perhaps painfully) clear: I am *not* saying the Incarnate Christ is less than fully human. I am saying He is not a human person. Human persons are *mere* humans, humans that are not sustained by a divine person in the way the humanity of Christ is sustained by the Logos. This is in keeping with the tradition on this matter.

    I take it, though, that this is by and large a stipulation about the meaning of "human person." If one would like to say that human persons are substances with full human natures, then the Incarnate Word would be a human person. I am using "human person" to cover only those fully human substances that are also, in the medieval terminology, "suppositums," that is, "independently existing ultimate subject(s) of characteristics" (Alfred Freddoso, "Human Nature, Potency, and the Incarnation," *Faith and Philosophy* 3.1 [1986]: 28). The human nature of the Incarnate Christ is not independently existing in the relevant way, as it depends for its existence on the Eternal Logos. Thus, the human nature of Christ is not a human person (that's Nestorianism!); rather the Incarnate Christ is a divine person with a fully human nature. That is why the Church has been hesitant to call the Incarnate Christ a human person.

    At any rate, notice that given bare particular theory, we can display the difference between "natures" that are suppositums and those that are not: natures that are suppositums are natures in which "the property" of that nature is tied to a bare particular, whereas natures that are not suppositums are natures in which "the property" of that nature is tied to a complex whole composed of a bare particular and "the property" of some other nature. For more on these matters, see Freddoso (Ibid.).

The Ghost in the Machine: Embodied Souls

STEWART GOETZ

I HAVE BEEN PRIVILEGED to call James Porter (J. P.) Moreland my friend for over thirty years. While he is a first-rate philosopher, he is also someone with great compassion for people. He genuinely exhibits the love of Christ. While he and I are first and foremost friends, we are also kindred spirits intellectually. We share the same philosophical beliefs about many things.

My charge in this chapter is to give an overview of J. P.'s understanding of a human being. He is an ardent proponent and defender of substance dualism ("dualism," for short), which is the view that a human being is composed of a soul and physical body. After summarizing J. P.'s understanding of dualism, I will briefly interact with a couple of his arguments for the existence of the soul.

EMBODIED SOULS: AN OVERVIEW OF J. P.'S DUALISM

According to J. P., a soul is an immaterial substance that is identical with a human person, and a human person is identical with a human being.[1] An immaterial substance is a particular thing that bears essential properties and is able to remain the same thing through time. It is not a "stuff" of an immaterial kind. An immaterial substance is a soul in virtue of having mental properties (having mental properties makes the immaterial substance the kind of thing it is, namely, a soul).[2] Mental properties are characterized by their intrinsic and subjective qualitative feel or texture, which is made evident in first-person direct awareness or introspection. For example, a pain is felt hurtfulness and in no way can it be

described intrinsically in physical terms (e.g., those of physics, chemistry, or biology).[3] Thus a cut in the knee is not itself painful. The cut causes an experience of pain.[4] Mental properties are self-presenting, which means that one is not aware of them by being aware of anything else. Self-presenting properties present other things to us intermediately by means of themselves (e.g., it is by a sensation of red that one is aware of an apple, but one is not aware of a sensation of red by means of another sensation).[5] To say that one is having a red sensation is to say that one is being appeared to redly.[6] Sensations are not always veridical. Thus, one might have a red sensation (be appeared to redly) while looking at an orange jar.[7]

J. P. clarifies his view of mental properties by means of what is known among philosophers as the "knowledge argument" (sometimes called the "Mary argument").[8] Suppose Mary is a scientist who has been confined to a room in which she has learned everything there is to be learned about the physical correlates of pain. Her knowledge of the physical correlates of pain is by hypothesis complete. All that she has learned about the physical correlates of pain has been acquired from the third-person perspective (which includes physics, neuroscience, etc.). Perhaps the best way to think of this is that everything Mary has learned about pain has been learned through the reading of books and the hearing of lectures. Then one day (for whatever reason) Mary emerges from her confines and is asked to go bowling. She picks up a ball at the local alley and accidentally drops it on her foot. She has an experience that she has never had before and asks (while gritting her teeth, etc.) what this experience is called. She is informed that she has just experienced pain.

Did Mary learn something new? J. P. believes that she did. For the first time, she learned about the intrinsic nature of pain. Up to the time when she dropped the bowling ball on her foot, she only knew about extrinsic, relational properties of pain (e.g., what causes pain and what are the results of experiencing pain). What she now knows about pain was learned from the first-person perspective.

In light of the two preceding paragraphs about having a sensation of red and experiencing pain, it follows that each of us has a multiplicity of mental properties. Like Legion in the gospels, our mental properties are many. Each of us has the property (power or capacity) of *being able to experience pain*, *being able to sense color*, *being able to know*, etc. (other important properties we typically possess are *having the capacity to desire* and *the power to choose*, which make it possible for us to act freely for purposes).[9] J. P. believes that mental properties are necessarily

owned by their possessors (my pain could not have occurred in you, though you might have experienced the same kind of pain that I experienced) and do not float around "looking for" an owner. They come owned from the outset.

So a person is a soul and a soul is a substance in which what is mental in nature takes place. Where is a soul located? To answer this question, J. P. believes we should be guided by the experience of our bodies. What we find is that we feel like we are present as a whole in the entirety of our bodies. From the first-person perspective, I feel like I am simultaneously in my hands, in my feet, in my abdomen, in my head, etc. In J. P.'s words, "I occupy my body as God occupies space, namely, by being fully present at each point throughout my body."[10] I do not occupy my body by having one substantial part of me in my head, another part of me in my left hand, and yet another part of me in my right foot. I cannot occupy my body in this way because, as we will see in a moment, I am an unextended simple thing that has no parts. Thus, while I occupy my body, I am not spatially extended throughout my body. Rather, I am a spatially unextended substance that is present in my totality wherever I am located.[11] And I move through space along with my body, when it moves through space.

J. P. is desirous that we know how his view of the soul's embodiment differs from René Descartes's account of the matter. On Descartes's view, the soul is not literally in any of the space occupied by its body (even though it seems to the soul that it is present in the space occupied by its body). The soul is completely nonspatial. Strictly speaking, it is nowhere. Moreover, according to Descartes, the body is a mechanistic substance that exists on its own. The soul does not give life to its body but is causally related to it as long as it is functioning properly. On Descartes's view, death is the irreversible cessation of function of the body. When death occurs, the soul ceases to be causally related to its body.

In contrast with Descartes, J. P. believes in a much more Thomistic (after Thomas Aquinas) view of the soul. On this view, the soul gives life to its body. Indeed, the soul "is responsible for the development of the brain and nervous system and, more generally, the body."[12] Because of this, the body is a human body because of "the diffusion of the soul as the essence of the body fully present in every body part. . . . The soul could exist without the body but not vice versa. . . . There is only one substance, though [it is not] the body-soul composite. . . . The one substance is the soul, and the body is an ensouled biological and physical structure that depends on the soul for its existence."[13] Thus, the soul nonconsciously,

yet teleologically, guides the development of its body "so as to realize the necessary bodily structure for the organism's functions to be actualized."[14] The different physical and chemical parts and processes (including DNA) are tools made use of by higher-order biological activities for the purpose of sustaining the various functions that are rooted in the soul.[15] Death is the cessation of ensoulment.

THE "SIMPLE ARGUMENT" FOR THE SOUL

The foregoing is a much too brief overview of J. P.'s carefully worked out dualism of soul and body. At this point, I believe it is fair to note that most philosophers, whether dualists or not, will find J. P.'s claim that a soul is a human person standard fare. What will strike them as odd is his claim that a soul is a human being. For most who think about human anthropology, the idea of a human being includes the idea of having a physical body. Hence, a human being is not a soul but a soul of a particular kind (a person) that has a physical body.

But setting this issue aside, why embrace dualism? Why not think that our mental properties are features of our brains? Or why not think that our mental properties are owned by our bodies as wholes? J. P. believes there is more than one argument that supports dualism and the view that mental properties are had by souls. One called the "Simple Argument,"[16] goes as follows (I have slightly modified the argument for purposes of exposition):

(1) I am essentially a simple, indivisible, unextended spiritual substance with no substantial parts.
(2) Any physical body is essentially a complex, divisible, extended, entity, which has and can be divided into substantial parts.
(3) Principle of Indiscernibility of Identicals (if x = y, then x has all the properties y has [and vice versa]).
(4) Therefore, I am not identical with my (or any) physical body.

For the sake of clarity, J. P. believes that we must distinguish between separable and inseparable parts of wholes. Briefly, a separable part of a whole is one that can exist on its own, if it is not a part of the whole of which it is a part. An inseparable part of a whole is one that cannot exist on its own, if it is not a part of that whole. The Simple Argument is concerned with separable parts. Thus, Premise (1) states that I am a substance that is simple, which entails that I have no separable parts and am indivisible. In J. P.'s terms, I am a spiritual simple.

J. P. believes there are two arguments that support Premise (1). Here is the first (given limitations of space, I will pass over the second argument). In science, it is often the case that apparently unrelated data can be unified and, thereby, made sense of by the postulation of an entity that causally explains them. For example, the postulation of electrons unified a multiplicity of phenomena by representing them as effects of the electrons' causal powers. Similarly, there is a host of seemingly unrelated data that are nicely unified by the postulation of the existence of a simple, substantially partless, indivisible soul. Some of the data (I do not list all of the data that J. P. cites) are as follows:[17]

(i) I have the deep intuition that I cannot exist in degrees. If I lose, say, half of my body or brain, I do not become half of a person. I am an all or nothing kind of being: either I am present or I am not.

(ii) I have the deep intuition that my consciousness is unified at a moment of time. At any given time, my mental states (e.g., my thoughts and sensations) are all seamlessly united in a single stream of consciousness that is mine. And I have no difficulty in identifying which mental states are mine. As stated above, I have direct access to them.

(iii) I have the deep intuition that my consciousness is unified across time. As I move from one room of my home to another, I seem to be the same person that lives through and owns each successive experience of my home.

(iv) I have strong intuitions that psychological criteria of personal identity in terms of memories, character and personality traits are neither necessary nor sufficient for my continued identity through change. Thus, I could and would remain the same person were I to undergo a change in personality and lose some or all of my memories. And just because the personality and memories that I have never change does not guarantee that I remain as the same person. Another person might have the same personality and memories and that person not be me.

(v) I have strong intuitions that I and my body have different persistence conditions (conditions that, if fulfilled, entail that the same entity continues to exist). For example, I could continue to exist as the same person with less than a fully intact body (e.g., one without arms or legs), or a different body, or no body at all (J. P. reminds us that descriptions of body swaps in science fiction are not met with protests that such occurrences are not even possible).

The best explanation of (i) through (v) is that I am directly aware of myself as a simple, indivisible spiritual substance. Because I am directly aware of myself as such a substance, I have the intuitions described in (i) through (v). In short, the intuitions captured in (i) through (v) "are easily unified if they are grounded in a direct awareness of the self as a simple, spiritual substance, and they are hard to unify and justify otherwise."[18] Moreover, J. P. believes that any attempt to deny one or more of (i) through (v) is strained: most people who do not have a philosophical agenda do or would concede all of (i) through (v). And it is thoroughly implausible to say that people affirm (i) through (v) because they are religious. Quite the contrary: on J. P.'s view people are religious because religious teachings affirm (i) through (v), which are known independently of being religious because they are known directly through introspection.

Someone might claim that (i) through (v) are a product of our language with its grammatical subjects and predicates, which are themselves a product of theories developed in the past about surviving death, the afterlife, punishment and reward, etc. In other words, because our ancestors wanted to survive death and be rewarded for a lived quality of life, they developed the first-person pronoun "I" that occupies the subject position in our linguistic utterances. J. P. believes this objection puts the proverbial cart before the horse. Contrary to what is suggested, our awareness of ourselves as substances explains the character of our language. More generally, people did not come up with the idea of the soul because they were theorizing about the world and needed the soul to play a theoretical role. No. People theorized about the world by employing concepts that they derived from direct awareness of themselves. Thus, "dualist intuitions are not primarily philosophical; they are commonsensical."[19]

Though J. P. does not deem it such, perhaps the most important argument against his claim that we are directly aware of ourselves as simple, indivisible immaterial substances is the following:

> Where I appeal to positive, direct awareness of the self, critics will appeal to a failure to be aware of substantive complexity (a failure to be aware of separable parts). Moreover, they will likely point out that this failure to be aware better explains why so many secular philosophers . . . who accept [(i) through (v)] are not dualists . . . . The critics can go on to say that my claim to be aware of substantive simplicity doesn't provide any explanation for why these scholars are not dualists. Indeed, if I am correct, these people should be dualists because they too have direct acquaintance with substantive simplicity.[20]

J. P. has three things to say in response. First, these critics are looking for the wrong kind of experience that constitutes the first-order awareness of themselves as simple, spiritual substances. People who reject a direct awareness of themselves as simple souls are looking for something like experiencing a sensation of pain or the having of a sensation of red. However, a first-order awareness of the soul is not like that and people who claim not to have it miss it because they are looking for the wrong thing.[21]

Second, while the way things seem to a person is hard to undermine, it is true that an individual can come to have a belief that is weightier than and leads to a rejection (defeat) of the belief that corresponds to the way things seem. So the all-important question in the present context is what might be such a belief? J. P. says that all too often the belief in question arises out of a prior commitment to physicalism, which, without independent support, amounts to begging the question against what we seem to be aware of about the self's simplicity in the first-person experience. Thus, to avoid begging the question the physicalist must provide independent reasons for physicalism that are sufficient to overturn what we seem to be directly aware of from the first-person perspective. When all is said and done, J. P. believes that the arguments of physicalists in support of their view are "surprisingly weak."[22] The most frequently rehearsed arguments claim that dualism is no longer believable in light of advances in modern science. J. P. thinks these advances are largely irrelevant to debates about dualism, primarily because the most that science can establish are correlations between mental and physical events and these correlations provide no basis for identifying the events in question, given that the epistemic justification for dualism is first-person direct awareness that is prior to science.[23]

Third, and finally, it is not implausible to think that physicalists desire that the soul not exist and this desire leads them to deny that they have direct acquaintance with its existence. If this seems too far-fetched to believe, J. P. points out that the philosopher Thomas Nagel has gone on record to declare that he desires that God not exist because he desires not to have to answer to a cosmic authority.[24]

In concluding my presentation of J. P.'s first argument for the view that mental properties are had by simple souls and dualism is true, I think it is fair to say that his account of belief that the soul exists is akin to Alvin Plantinga's account of belief that God exists.[25] According to Plantinga, while it is possible to present arguments for God's existence, belief that God exists is properly basic in the sense that

it is not inferred from anything else that one believes. The claim that belief that God exists is basic in this way does not imply that it is groundless or unwarranted. There is a ground for the belief. According to Plantinga, such a ground might be an occasion on which one is beholding the starry expanses of the heavens. Upon seeing the heavenly realm, one comes to believe something like "God created all of this," which implies that one believes in the existence of God. One does not, says Plantinga, infer God's existence from what one beholds. Rather, one finds the belief arising in oneself in the context of beholding the starry heavens. This context grounds the belief, where the belief is basic.

Similarly, although he presents an argument for the existence of the soul and the truth of dualism, I believe it is plausible to hold that J. P. thinks belief that the soul exists is properly basic. It is a belief that is not inferred from anything else that one believes but instead is had in light of a direct awareness of oneself as a soul when experiencing pain, thinking about one's plans for the coming afternoon, having a red sensation, etc. These occasions provide the ground for the belief.

A CONCEPTUALIST ARGUMENT FOR THE SOUL

If one is not convinced by J. P.'s first argument (the Simple Argument) for the view that the soul exists as a simple, spiritual substance, he has a second. This argument is conceptualist in nature. It can be summarized as follows: If one understands what it is to be an entity E, then one has an adequate concept of E. Moreover, if one has an adequate concept of E, then one has a *distinct positive* concept of it. Thus, if one understands what it is to be an E, then one has a distinct positive concept of it. Now if we let E be God, and we understand what it is for God to be a divine soul or spirit, then we have a distinct positive concept of God being a divine spirit. In saying that a concept is distinct and positive in nature, J. P. means that its content must be sufficient for distinguishing its referent from other entities of its genus. Thus, "to have a distinct positive concept of being a dog I would need to have a positive concept of the differentia, of that which marks out dogs uniquely and sets them apart from cats and other mammals."[26] The positive nature of a concept entails that the concept cannot consist entirely of denials of the form "is not this," "is not that," etc. Stated slightly differently, a distinct positive concept cannot be characterized in strictly negative terms. Thus, a spirit (J. P. uses "spirit" and "soul" interchangeably) is not just the absence of matter (being nonphysical or immaterial), because the number two satisfies this privative condition.

Now what happens if we accept for the sake of argument that thinking matter is possible (i.e., that a material object might be able to think)? If this is possible, how can we have a distinct positive concept of a spirit? We cannot use "is able to think, feel, sense, etc." as the positive characterization of "spirit" that marks it out from material objects, because we have conceded that material objects might be able to think, feel, sense, etc. Similarly, we cannot positively characterize "spirit" as "is not composed of separable parts," "is not solid," "is not extended," etc., because these are all negative characterizations. The upshot is that if we allow for the possibility that a material object might think, feel, sense, etc., then we fail to have any distinct positive concept of a soul. But we do have a positive concept of a divine soul insofar as we have a concept of God as a divine spirit. Hence, it is reasonable to conclude that by "spirit" we mean "is able to think, feel, sense, etc.," and the assumption that a material object can think, feel, sense, etc., was mistaken. "So 'thinking matter' is metaphysically impossible."[27] And because we do think, sense, and feel, we must be spirits.

What is one to make of this argument on behalf of the claim that mental properties are had by souls and only by souls and, therefore, that, given the reality of material objects, dualism is true? I begin by taking us back to J. P.'s claim that we are directly aware of ourselves as simple, spiritual substances. Does this awareness include an awareness of the soul's property of being simple (which along with the property of being unextended entails not being divisible into parts), as opposed to an awareness of the mere absence or lack (a kind of privation) of parts? J. P. believes that it does. On his view, the property of *being simple* is a primitive property that accompanies the soul's possession of mental properties like being able to think, feel, and sense. And when one is directly aware of oneself as a soul, one is aware of the property of being simple.

Given his stance on simplicity, the next issue for J. P. is whether the property of *being simple* can be exemplified only by immaterial things like souls. If only immaterial things can exemplify this property, then maybe an awareness of it is what entails our having a distinct, positive conception of ourselves as immaterial in nature.

At this point, it is helpful to consider the dualism of Descartes (see *Meditation on First Philosophy* VI). Descartes seems to have believed that the property of *being simple* could not be exemplified by material things because he conceived of a body as that which is extended in virtue of being made up of separable parts and

is divisible into those parts. This seemingly implies that a body is composed of, and is in principle divisible into, an infinite number of parts. However, J. P. is not a Cartesian. He believes in the possibility of material atomic simples that, though extended and divisible, are not made up of separable parts. Hence, the property of *being simple* does not differentiate the immaterial from the material. Thus, the need exists to rule out the possibility of thinking matter, because if matter can take the form of an atomic simple that thinks, feels, senses, etc., we are left with no positive concept of what it is to be a spirit. (It is helpful here to remember that J. P. believes a soul is not like extended matter that has the property of *being simple* and yet is divisible. A soul is simple and unextended, and thus not divisible.)

Before going any further, it is relevant to remind ourselves that we are swimming in deep waters when talking about what makes things material and immaterial. J. P. is candid enough to admit this (in private conversation). So what are the alternatives, if any, to his view about the material and immaterial? Well, one could go with Descartes and maintain that because the thing that thinks, feels, and senses is simple, it is immaterial. And it is immaterial because being simple excludes being extended, where being extended is the defining property of being material. But is there any reason to stick with this Cartesian position? Here, a Cartesian might try to turn the tables on J. P. and demand of him a distinct, positive concept of what it is to be material. If being extended with separable parts is not what makes something material, then what does?

In discussing the metaphysical view known as "physicalism," which maintains that everything that exists is material, J. P. says matter is "most likely . . . elementary particles (whether taken as points of potentiality, as centers of mass or energy or as units of spatially extended stuff or waves) . . . organized in various ways according to the laws of nature."[28] If matter is units of spatially extended stuff, then a Cartesian might jump to the conclusion that J. P.'s position is in trouble in the way just pointed out above: contrary to what J. P. maintains, being simple is sufficient to make something non-extended and immaterial. And when the property of *being simple* is conjoined with properties like *being able to think, feel, and sense*, they together are sufficient to make something a spirit. The problem for a Cartesian, however, is that J. P. believes something could be extended yet simple, and thereby not be composed of separable parts. At this point, I don't know of any way to arbitrate the disagreement between J. P. and a Cartesian. It seems to me that the strongest argument on a Cartesian's behalf would be to say that the idea of some-

thing's being extended but not made up of separable parts is indeed mysterious. After all, what makes something extended, if it is not that it is made of separable parts? I suspect that J. P. would respond that *being extended* is a primitive property that cannot be analyzed or reduced.

What about J. P.'s other specifications of what it is to be material? How do they fare in relationship to the concept of a soul? Could a soul satisfy one or more of them and end up being material? Here we must remember that J. P. believes that a soul is located in space (it is located in its entirety at every point occupied by its physical body) with the potentiality to move. As a moveable simple, the soul seems to be a point of potentiality (it has the potential to move or be moved) and perhaps also a center of energy, if by "a center of energy" J. P. means "a center of causal activity." After all, on J. P.'s view the soul causes events to occur in its physical body. What about being "a center of attractive and repellent powers"? Might a soul be this? Well, if the soul is moved through space by something other than itself, perhaps this other thing causally affects a soul's attractive and/or repellent powers to produce movement in it (the soul). In short, it is not implausible to hold that it is incumbent on J. P. to explain why a soul that is located in space does not exemplify the properties that he says make something material. (What about mass? Might a soul have mass? If "mass" is understood as "being resistant to acceleration by force," then it seems that a spatially located simple soul that can move and/or be moved might also have mass.) If the soul does exemplify these properties, then the soul seems to be material and we once again lack any distinct, positive conception of what it is to be a soul. Perhaps J. P. would say that the properties of matter he sets forth are necessary, but not sufficient, for being material. Thus a soul could exemplify them, without being material. What would make the soul immaterial would be its exemplification of mental properties.

CONCLUSION

Where do the arguments of the previous two sections leave us? As someone who has read a good bit of modern philosophy of mind, I think that most physicalists would certainly find J. P.'s argument for a distinct, positive conception of a spirit philosophically interesting, though in the end, I'm sure they would resist its conclusion. I suspect that they might resist even more J. P.'s claim that he has a direct awareness of himself as a *simple* substance. Why so? Well, if persons are *simple* substantial bearers of mental properties (souls) as J. P. claims, then they

are ontologically basic. They are some of the basic building blocks of reality, not higher order or surface features of that reality. Thus, they are not reducible to arrangements of matter. This simplicity and the ability to act freely for purposes in ways that are not quantifiable or describable in terms of physical laws suggest the existence of something that is non- or supernatural in nature. In short, given the existence of spiritual simples, we seem to be on a road that might, along with other considerations, lead to theism. And as J. P. has reminded us, for those like Thomas Nagel this is a road that is best not taken.[29]

Notes

1. J. P. Moreland and Scott B. Rae, *Body and Soul: Human Nature and the Crisis in Ethics* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 121.
2. Ibid., 157–58.
3. Ibid., 158.
4. Ibid., 160.
5. Ibid., 161.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid., 161–64.
9. Ibid., 121–55, 158–60.
10. J. P. Moreland, "Substance Dualism and the Argument from Self-Awareness," *Philosophia Christi* 13 (2011): 25.
11. Moreland and Rae, *Body and Soul*, 202–3.
12. Ibid., 200.
13. Ibid., 201.
14. Ibid., 204.
15. Ibid., 205.
16. Moreland, "Substance Dualism and the Argument from Self-Awareness," 22.
17. Ibid., 24–6.
18. Ibid., 27.
19. Ibid., 30.
20. Ibid., 31.
21. Ibid., 31–2.
22. Ibid., 33.
23. Ibid., 34.
24. Ibid., 33.

25. Alvin Plantinga, *Warranted Christian Belief* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).
26. J. P. Moreland, "A Conceptualist Argument for a Spiritual Soul," *Religious Studies* 49 (2013): 37.
27. Ibid., 43.
28. Moreland and Rae, *Body and Soul*, 93.
29. I want to thank the members of the Biola University Center for Christian Thought for their helpful comments on this paper.

Is Man the Measure?

Truth *and* Postmodernism *in* Perspective

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J. P. MORELAND'S WORK on truth often has been coupled with his work on postmodernism. With the latter, he has focused on two overall emphases. First, he has addressed the denial of objective knowledge and reason, which involves attending to issues of epistemological objectivity, foundationalism, and what he has rightly identified as *the* core issue with postmodernism: do we have direct access to reality itself, or is all our access somehow mediated? Second, he has addressed in these contexts some of the ontological aspects of truth. Also, in discussions of philosophy of perception, he has discussed the ontology of mental states, and how all these metaphysical factors bear upon postmodern thought.

These foci are important for engaging and understanding postmodern thought on a number of levels, and they will form the first section of my essay. I will also try to nuance some of his points in light of interactions with other postmoderns. But, in the second part, I will try to unpack in more detail what is seldom addressed in postmodern literature or its critiques—the general ontological patterns of postmodernism. As we will see, there are reasons for this lack of discussion by postmoderns. Then, I will test their ontological positions, and I will argue that they undercut *all* knowledge.

In part three, I will draw out some further implications of these findings for believers and the kingdom of God, which will help explain J. P.'s often passionate responses to Christians who have embraced the postmodern turn.

J. P.'S OVERALL TREATMENT OF POSTMODERNISM AND TRUTH

In many places, J. P. treats postmodernism in terms of historical, chronological, and philosophical theses. Historically, postmodernism is a period of thought that is a reaction against modernity, which he describes as "the period of European thought that developed out of the Renaissance (fourteenth to seventeenth centuries) and flourished in the Enlightenment (seventeenth to nineteenth centuries) in the ideas of people like Descartes, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, Reid, Leibniz, and Kant."[1] Chronologically, postmodernity has followed and (in certain senses) replaced modernity.

Philosophically, J. P. often describes postmodernism as a version of cultural relativism about the nature of truth, reality, the self, meaning, and more. It denies the existence of objective reality and truth, along with reason.[2] Yet, in another essay, he nuances this latter claim by distinguishing four "degrees" of postmodernism: (1) *ontic* (which is a thoroughgoing construction of reality; perhaps only someone like Richard Rorty might hold this); (2) *alethic* (which denies the concept of truth, but not the reality of a mind-independent world); (3) *epistemic* (which rejects objectivity epistemologically); and (4) *axiological* (in which ethics and religion are treated in postmodern ways).[3]

I think his notions of alethic and epistemic postmodernism, perhaps combined, are the varieties most encountered in Christian postmodern literature. None of them want to deny the reality of creation and (especially) God, or to say that reality is *just* a construction of our language.[4] They also seem to insist that their views are not relativistic. For instance, J. P. notes that Philip Kenneson thinks "one can defend objective truth or relativism only by assuming it is possible for human beings to take up a 'view from nowhere,'" which he denies is possible.[5]

The Denial of Objective Knowledge and Reason

J. P. rightly observes that a crucial issue for postmoderns is that no one is objective epistemologically. That is, no one is neutral, unbiased, or dispassionate, and no one can (or should) extricate themselves from their "situatedness": their historical

location, culture, language, religion, or even (I would add) family upbringing—that is, their *particularity*.[6] For postmoderns, modernity emphasized that by way of reason we could all know universal, ahistorical, transcendent truths, affording us knowledge unaffected by our particularity. But they reject this idea; everyone is situated in the world as a conditioned observer. Due to our finitude, we have epistemic limitations and thus "blindness" due to our limited perspective. And due to our fallenness, we have blindness due to our sin and perversity.[7] Thus, no human being can ever hope to achieve an unbiased "God's eye" standpoint, be blind to nothing, and have exhaustive, pristine knowledge. It is deeply arrogant to think otherwise, and thus the postmodern view seemingly promotes humility.

Now, J. P. observes that postmoderns see this rejection as also impugning foundationalism, according to which we can have properly basic beliefs that are ultimately grounded in reality, and know that to be so. Indeed, this is a central motivation behind the view.[8] J. P. also points out that for many postmoderns, foundationalism is motivated by "Cartesian anxiety," a concern to have utter certainty in our beliefs.

There has been much confusion in attempted dialogues between foundationalists like J. P. and myself with many postmoderns, in which postmoderns often have depicted foundationalism as being only of the Cartesian sort. But genuine progress has been made on this front, as in J. P.'s dialogue with John Franke.[9] J. P. defends a modest foundationalism, in which the foundational beliefs are not necessarily indubitable (since precious few beliefs are), yet they still are based upon our having direct access to reality.

So, the crucial issue, which J. P. rightly realizes to be so, is whether we can have direct acquaintance with reality.[10] But for postmoderns, our situatedness requires that they reject any creaturely ability to have such access, for it means that we somehow have set aside our "filters" and "conditionedness" to have a naked gaze at reality itself. Since it bears such a strong family resemblance to epistemological objectivity and foundationalism, all three must be rejected by postmoderns.

For J. P., part of the answers to these issues associated with epistemological objectivity reside in clarifying *psychological* and *objective* rationality. Psychological rationality is "detachment, the absence of bias, a lack of commitment either way on a topic."[11] By contrast, objective rationality is "the state of having *accurate* experiential or cognitive access to the thing itself,"[12] on the basis of which we can have *accurate* (not exhaustive) knowledge thereof. Helpfully, he observes

that people *can* be psychologically objective, especially in areas about which they have little to no interest. Even so, it is not necessarily a virtue, for if we have thought about some issue and developed convictions (such as that rape is wrong), it would be wrong to remain unbiased.

But even if we are not psychologically objective, we still can be rationally objective. Here J. P. often appeals to case studies that people can replicate, to see for themselves if these things are so, using a phenomenological method he learned from studying Edmund Husserl under Dallas Willard. So, if we have a commitment to some viewpoint, we still can assess arguments and evidence for and against it, to see if we should still remain committed to that belief (say, who to vote for in the next election).

Because of that ability, we can discern the difference between good and bad reasons for holding a belief. Thus, our biases do not "stand between" us and what we are thinking about or experiencing. If they did, how could we ever get started in experiencing or knowing anything? Moreover, as he puts it, "bias may make it more difficult [to be rationally objective], but not impossible. If bias made rational objectivity impossible, then no teacher—including the postmodernist herself—could responsibly teach any view the teacher believed on any subject! Nor could she teach opposing viewpoints because she would be biased against them!"[13]

Still, J. P. says that on postmodernism (at least the alethic kind), the factors of our situatedness "stand between" us and reality such that reality ends up being a construct we make by how we use our particular languages in respective communities.[14] Sometimes that is how postmoderns themselves put things. Stanley Grenz and John Franke say that "we do not inhabit the 'world-in-itself'; instead, we live in a linguistic world of our own making."[15] However, from my interactions, it may be better to interpret the denial of direct access and the effects of our situatedness more along the lines of James K. A. Smith in his appeal to Jacques Derrida. For them, interpretation is ubiquitous. As Smith puts it, the postmodern turn is the turn to interpretation, such that "all of our experience is always already an interpretation."[16] But while this approach avoids the "standing between" metaphor, it still denies direct access to reality.

As an aspect of his answers to the issues with epistemological objectivity, J. P. brings clarity to the possible ways our situatedness affects our abilities to access reality. Frankly, I think this is one of the most helpful contributions one can make to this discussion. There are three ways to understand our situatedness, he

explains, the first being *constructivism*, according to which whatever it is we are experiencing or thinking about is somehow made to be what it is by our mental act directed upon it.[17] This could be by how we talk about or interpret it. But this view is simply false; as J. P. realizes, we can pay attention to things in the external world. We also can pay attention to our thoughts, words, or experiences for what they are, and we can notice that they do nothing to change the former.[18]

Second, there is *epistemic closure*. This is a denial that we ever have direct access to anything in reality. Indeed, this view seems to be what postmoderns commonly seem to mean. But if this were so, then we have logical and descriptive problems. Logically, if all access (for example, in experience) requires interpretation, then what are we experiencing? Surely not another interpretation. But this view seems to leave us stuck with a vicious infinite regress, without any way to get started and encounter reality at all. Descriptively, J. P. offers case studies that help illustrate how we can become aware that in our everyday lives, we are directly acquainted with reality. This is how, for instance, children learn to form concepts of mundane things like apples—by many experiences of apples, noticing what is in common among them, and then forming a concept on that basis. Then it can be used to compare with something new they see, to see if it too is an apple (and not, say, a red ball). We adults do this kind of comparison all the time, too—for example, when we use our mobile phones to refill prescriptions, or enter our "PIN" code to buy something.[19]

Third, however, is what he calls *attentive influence*, which he argues actually is what is at work with humans. In this, we have the abilities (as a descriptive matter of fact) to compare our concepts with things as they truly are, just as in the apple example above, and adjust our concepts as needed to better fit with reality. And we can know this to be so, if we pay careful attention to what is consciously before our minds.

Moreover, over time, attentive influence often reflects a pattern. That is, "people fall into ruts and adopt ways of seeing things according to which certain features are noticed and others are neglected."[20] What I notice in watching a movie a second time could largely be a reflection of what I noticed the first time. But J. P. provocatively and accurately, I think, suggests that "situatedness functions as a set of habit forming background beliefs and concepts that direct our acts of noticing or failing to notice various features of reality."[21]

For example, I grew up with parents who were born into Christian-based

families in 1914. They were raised with fundamentalist influences, including a fear of losing their salvation unless they were careful. Additionally, they had other anxieties, in part from their family backgrounds. But one parent also seemed to have had obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD), and I inherited not only that disposition, but I also "caught" their other fears. For instance, as a child, I was obsessed with having to be perfect, or else God would not love me. That fear, along with my own tendencies toward OCD, have stayed with me through much of my adult life, even unconsciously impeding and coloring my ability to really embrace, not just rationally but also emotionally (at the heart-level), that God really loves me. My family background, both in terms of nurture and genetics, helped habituate how I tended to perceive God. However, through a lengthy period of depression, anxiety, and counseling, the Lord met me and spoke intimately to my heart that He loves me with all His heart. Finally, after helping to deal with the factors that were blocking my experience of His love, I was able to experience Him and His love as they are—not fully, nor exhaustively, but still accurately. The result has been a *much* greater freedom from my former mindset, and even an ability to experience His joy, which had been a long-term prayer request.

So our "situatedness" affects how we attend to reality, but, as with my case, with effort and sometimes help, we can change how we do that. This may require forming new habits, but it can be done. Otherwise, things like therapy, or even coming to see the extent to which language and culture influence us, would be impossible.

The Denial of Objective Truth

From what we have surfaced, we may remark more quickly on the postmodern view of truth. They reject the long-standing correspondence theory of truth, which is a metaphysical thesis according to which a "truth-bearer" matches up, or is in a correspondence relation, with a "truth-maker," namely, some state of affairs in reality.[22] Due to their beliefs about the effects of situatedness, postmoderns have to reject the correspondence theory. However, that does not mean that they must reject all notions of objective truth. As Merold Westphal says, there is objective "Truth," but only for God. As finite and fallen creatures we can never achieve God's view, and thus we always work from a standpoint of how the world appears to us.[23] Yet, Westphal seems to substitute an epistemological notion of truth, rather than an ontological one. Truth might be what people in a language

game mean by that term. It may be a matter not so much of truth, but *truthfulness*, that is, one's story being in conformity with the master narrative of one's community (such as Jesus' story for Christians).

Now I will shift attention even more to the ontological positions of postmodernism, and we will find that J. P. has anticipated and addressed these issues as well.

ON THE METAPHYSICAL STANCES OF POSTMODERNISM

Despite the strong emphasis upon particularity by postmodernists, nonetheless there are patterns, even metaphysically. First, following Wittgenstein, there has been a tendency to try to avoid metaphysics due to its supposed "confusions." Brad Kallenberg explains that for Wittgenstein, metaphysical theories muddy the waters by searching for "totalizing," theoretical (i.e., modern) explanations. In their place, he proposes that we replace explanation with description.[24] This involves paying attention to how we *use* our languages in our forms of life. Engaging in metaphysics is not, then, to be a search for essences and "theoria," but a focus upon how we talk metaphysically in a language game.

Second, postmodernism is a rejection of essences and universals, as Moreland realizes.[25] Let me illustrate by drawing upon Westphal's development of Derrida's theory of signs. If we cannot have direct access to anything as it is in itself (i.e., *essentially*), then, contrary to Husserl, it would be misguided to search for essences or universals. We could only experience *particulars* (for example, a particular red shade in the ball), but not redness, a universal.

Westphal appeals to Derrida's claim that "there is nothing outside the text."[26] For Westphal, epistemically, it means that "being must always already be conceptualized," for we never have direct access to things themselves.[27] Metaphysically, things themselves are signs and not what is signified, so they "essentially point beyond themselves."[28] Therefore, Westphal claims "there is no signified that 'would place a reassuring end to the reference from sign to sign' by failing to refer beyond itself."[29]

Why so? For Derrida, there is always an absence "to" things, which yet is present. What is not present is somehow essential to what is. Derrida denies that things, such as thoughts, facts, or linguistic utterances are wholes, complete in themselves. Rather, from one re-presentation to another, there always will be *differance*. Nothing has an identity that can be circumscribed, which is due to the denial of essences.

The implications of this denial can be clarified by appealing to Daniel Dennett. He borrows from W. V. O. Quine's "indeterminacy of radical translation," according to which it always is possible for two rival translations to tie for being the "best."[30] For Quine, Dennett, and even the postmoderns, there are no *intrinsic* meanings to words because there are no essences. Conversely, if there were essences ("deeper facts") to words and meanings, then they could have a determinate meaning.[31]

Now, Dennett remarks that Samuel Wheeler draws insightful connections between Quine, Donald Davidson, and Derrida. Per Wheeler, Derrida provides "important, if dangerous, supplementary arguments and considerations" to the ones that Davidson and Quinians have made.[32] As Wheeler notes, "For Quinians, of course, it is obvious already that speech and thought are brain-writing, *some kind of tokenings which are as much subject to interpretation as any other*."[33]

This last sentence nails the issue, whether for naturalists like Dennett and Quine, or postmoderns: due to a denial specifically of essences, anything in reality (whether a thought, word, person, or any other object) is subject to interpretation. And there is no way to stop the regress of interpretations, due to the denial of essences (and, as a prime example, universals). There is no way to get started to know anything. Yet, we do know many things, even if not infallibly or exhaustively (J. P. is quick to point this out due to his particularism). So this view must be false.

Third, the denial of essences finds an extension in postmodern literature to their views of the self. Predictably, its unity is not that of an essence, unlike J. P.'s views of the soul, but instead is that of a narrative. Narratives are always formed by the language of a community, so that a self's story is not just an individual's making, but a communal one.[34] J. P. agrees, for he notes that on postmodern views, the self is a social construct.

Now, for postmoderns, it seems narratives must be made up of a bundle of particular sentences (not propositions, which would be universals with essences, as Moreland observes).[35] As people live, the events of their lives continue to unfold. So their narratives also change. What then provides the sameness of the person through these changes? It seems there is nothing to ground that identity, except perhaps some linguistic ascriptions that stipulate that all linguistic ascriptions in a given story are about the same person. But there is no essence to a story. Even those "identifying" ascriptions would just be parts of a bundle, and the bundle constantly changes as new ascriptions are made. Thus, there is no basis for the

person to remain the same through change.

That result has serious repercussions, especially for postmodern views. Often they want to appeal to a virtue ethic, so that we can grow in virtue (and Christlikeness for Christian authors).[36] But such growth is impossible; there is only the addition of new linguistic ascriptions to a narrative, which makes it a new narrative and consequently a new person, not a development of the original one. But growth in virtue presupposes the literal sameness of a person through such changes.[37]

If we cannot have knowledge on postmodernism, how do we have knowledge? Dallas Willard explains that there is a natural affinity between thought (which has concepts) and its objects, *due to their essential natures*.[38] Due to its nature, the concept of an apple has a natural affinity with the properties apples must have to be apples. Concepts are *intentional properties*; the essential properties of an apple are its *intensional properties*, and actual apples make up the *extension of the concept*. The nature of a concept of an apple is to be of apples "because in their nature [concepts] inherently involve something else (their specific objects)."[39]

Three *crucial* points arise. First, Willard observes that

> a primary manifestation of the affinity between thought and object is the fact that no one ever has to be taught what their thought (or perception) is a thought (or perception) *of*, nor could they be … the child knows what its thoughts (perceptions, etc.) are of as soon as it becomes aware that it is having experiences; and that is one foundation of most other learning that transpires.[40]

It seems our own, first-person access to what is before us consciously (including our intentional states) allows us to identify what our thoughts (with their concepts) are *of*.

Second, our thoughts, and thus our concepts, do not confer any new properties upon their objects. How so? Importantly, intensional properties (say, of apples) are *not* in the mind, whereas intentional properties (which are concepts) are. An apple's intensional properties are *before* my mind in my thought, which has the concept of them present in it. Concepts are the intentional "bridge" between thought and its objects. These two kinds of properties are "together" in a way that the intensional properties "come to mind" whenever that concept is instanced in thought. I can also think of nonexistent things like Pegasus. I can have in mind the concept of Pegasus, a concept that would reach the intensional properties Pegasus *would* have *if* it existed. But since it doesn't, my thought gets no further.

Third, we each can compare our awareness of an object, *as it is before our minds*, with our concept of that object, and vice versa, to see if they match up. I can see if they are the same or different, and I can see if my thought of that thing does (or does not do) anything to modify it. As Willard puts it, "In fact we do this sort of thing all the time, whenever we look at something to see if it is as we have thought it to be."[41] Indeed, as he argues, even those who deny such access to the real world do this all the time, yet they additionally hold that in thinking, seeing, or mentally acting upon some object, we modify it, such that we cannot get to the real thing in itself. But this is nonsense, as that very ability is presupposed in that denial.

SOME IMPLICATIONS FOR THE KINGDOM

J. P. is right; postmoderns and evangelicals can agree on many key needs—for example, humility, the rejection of arrogance and control (even with the "legalistic, ugly nature of abuses of rationalistic doctrinal certainty when such is not available"[42]), attention to situatedness, experiencing the Spirit, our dependency on Him, and more. But there is also a key difference. Genesis 3:5 ("For God knows that when you eat of [the fruit] your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.") is a warning, first to postmoderns, I think, because by holding that we cannot hear God's voice, except only as we interpret it, in effect we end up being usurpers of His throne, defining reality as we see best. But Genesis 3:5 is also a warning to evangelicals, who can usurp by subtly and even arrogantly leaning on their own understandings as canonical, rather than on the Spirit.

I think this is a major reason why J. P. gets so passionate in his exhortations to postmoderns (and evangelicals too). Having been given the examples of Bill Bright, Dallas Willard, and Jesus Himself, he and I have tasted and seen the reality of the kingdom and the deep fulfillment of an intimate relationship with Christ. Neither of us wants to see Christians shortchanged or harmed and thus fall short of living in the fullness of His Spirit and Truth. What they (and the nations) need is for the Lord to bring about deep repentance among His people, so that we may see Him powerfully revive His church, thereby bringing about a massive incoming of people into His kingdom for His glory (not ours).

Notes

1. J. P. Moreland, *Kingdom Triangle* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007), 77.
2. Ibid. See also J. P. Moreland and William Lane Craig, *Philosophical Foundations for a Christian Worldview* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 145; and his "Postmodernism and Truth," *Reasons for Faith: A Survey of Contemporary Christian Issues and Evidences*, eds. Norman L. Geisler and Chad Meister (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2007), 116.
3. J. P. Moreland, "Four Degrees of Postmodernism," *Come Let Us Reason: New Essays in Christian Apologetics*, eds. Paul Copan and William Lane Craig (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2012), 17–34.
4. For example, see James K. A. Smith's reply to me, in which I argued that on postmodern views, we construct reality by our language use. He helpfully responded that postmodern thought is not a "stilted Kantianism," but instead means that "the very experience of the things themselves is a matter of interpretation." Indeed, "that interpreting the world as creation is, I would argue, the *true* interpretation, does not negate its status as an interpretation or 'conditioned seeing' (contra 'direct acquaintance')" (emphasis in original). James K. A. Smith, "Who's Afraid of Postmodernism? A Response to the 'Biola School'," *Christianity and the Postmodern Turn*, ed. Myron B. Penner (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2005), 218.
5. Philip Kenneson, "There's No Such Thing as Objective Truth, and It's a Good Thing, Too," in *Christian Apologetics in a Postmodern World*, eds. Timothy Phillips and Dennis Okholm (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1995), 156. In my experience, tactically, it doesn't help to tell postmodernists they are relativists. Likely, they will reply, "You just don't understand."
6. For example, see Moreland, *Kingdom Triangle*, 78.
7. Merold Westphal, "Phenomenologies and Religious Truth," in *Phenomenology of the Truth Proper to Religion*, ed. Daniel Guerrière (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990), 121.
8. See my "Post-Conservatives, Foundationalism, and Theological Truth: A Critical Evaluation," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 48 (2005): 351–63. Nancey Murphy realizes this and, accordingly, claims that even so-called "foundational" beliefs hang "from the balcony" (that is, they too are theory-laden). See *Beyond Liberalism & Fundamentalism: How Modern and Postmodern Philosophy Set the Theological Agenda*, Rockwell Lecture Series, ed. Werner H. Kelber (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1996), 92.
9. See J. P. Moreland, "Two Areas of Reflection and Dialogue with John Franke," *Philosophia Christi* 8 (2006): 307–8. To her credit, Murphy realizes it is not the only kind in *Beyond Liberalism*.
10. See "Two Areas of Reflection and Dialogue with John Franke," 309.
11. Moreland, *Kingdom Triangle*, 79.
12. Ibid (emphasis added).
13. Moreland, "Postmodernism and Truth," 119 (bracketed insert mine).
14. For example, see his "Four Degrees of Postmodernism," 20; and *Philosophical Foundations*, 145.

15. Stanley J. Grenz and John R. Franke, *Beyond Foundationalism: Shaping Theology in a Postmodern Context* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 53. I, too, followed this understanding of postmodern views in my *Truth and the New Kind of Christian* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2005).
16. James K. A. Smith, "Who's Afraid of Postmodernism?" 225.
17. Moreland, "Two Areas of Reflection and Dialogue with John Franke," 309–11.
18. I could, however, direct a recent thought upon another thought of mine and change it in light of the newer one. But even there, I still must attend to that original thought and the newer one *as they are*, even to compare them. In the text I am mainly addressing objects and persons in the world that exist whether or not I ever think of them (that is, they are mind-independent).
19. For examples, see my *Truth and the New Kind of Christian*, 174–84.
20. Moreland, "Two Areas of Reflection and Dialogue with John Franke," 311.
21. Ibid.
22. For example, see Moreland, *Philosophical Foundations*, 135–42.
23. Merold Westphal, "Christian Philosophers and the Copernican Revolution," in *Christian Perspectives on Religious Knowledge*, eds. C. Stephen Evans and Merold Westphal (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1993), 176.
24. Brad J. Kallenberg, *Ethics as Grammar: Changing the Postmodern Subject* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2001), 212.
25. Moreland, *Philosophical Foundations*, 147.
26. Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Press, 1976), 158, quoted in Merold Westphal, "Hermeneutics as Epistemology," *The Blackwell Guide to Epistemology*, eds. John Greco and Ernest Sosa (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1999), 429.
27. Westphal, "Hermeneutics as Epistemology," 430.
28. Ibid.
29. Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, 49, as quoted by Westphal, "Hermeneutics as Epistemology," 430.
30. Daniel C. Dennett, *The Intentional Stance* (Cambridge, MA.: MIT Press, 1989), 40.
31. Ibid., 208.
32. Samuel C. Wheeler III, "Indeterminacy of French Interpretation: Derrida and Davidson," in E. Lepore, ed., *Truth and Interpretation: Perspectives on the Philosophy of Donald Davidson* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986), 477, quoted in Dennett, *The Intentional Stance*, 40, note 2.
33. Wheeler, "Indeterminacy of French Interpretation," 492, quoted in Dennett, *The Intentional Stance*, 40, fn. 2 (emphasis mine).
34. This has much affinity with Alasdair MacIntyre's views of the narrative unity of the self. See his *After Virtue*, 3rd ed. (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007), chap. 15.

35. Moreland, *Philosophical Foundations*, 136–39. The same applies to the correspondence relation, which he defends as an abstract entity with an essential nature (138–39).
36. For example, MacIntyre, Stanley Hauerwas, and Brad Kallenberg all embrace a kind of virtue ethic along with key Wittgensteinian assumptions. For example, see Hauerwas's *Character and the Christian Life: A Study in Theological Ethics* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1994), or Kallenberg's *Ethics as Grammar.*
37. See also R. Scott Smith, *Virtue Ethics and Moral Knowledge*: *Philosophy of Language after MacIntyre and Hauerwas* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2003), chap. 6. Having knowledge also requires the sameness of a person through change. See my *Naturalism and Our Knowledge of Reality: Testing Religious Truth-claims* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2012), 193–94.
38. Dallas Willard, "How Concepts Relate the Mind to Its Objects: The God's Eye View Vindicated?" *Philosophia Christi* 1 (1999): 18.
39. Ibid., 15. See also Thomas Reid, *An Inquiry into the Human Mind, on the Principles of Common Sense*, ed. Derek R. Brookes (Bristol: Thoemmes, 1990), chap. 4.
40. Willard, "How Concepts Relate the Mind to Its Objects," 14–15.
41. Ibid., 18.
42. Moreland, "Two Areas of Reflection and Dialogue with John Franke," 311.

PART TWO

Thinking for Christ *in the* World

Christianity *as a* Knowledge Tradition

DOUGLAS GROOTHUIS

J. P. MORELAND, BY PRECEPT and example, has long emphasized that Christianity is a "knowledge tradition," and not a matter of blind faith or mere cultural practice or memory. That means that Christians in the past did and Christians in the present and future should stick their necks out into the world of ideas, claiming that the Christian worldview is a matter of knowledge. That is, that one can believe the Christian message to be objectively true and rationally compelling. I entirely agree, having learned essentially the same thing from reading Francis Schaeffer (1912–1984) before J. P.'s many books and articles and lectures graced the cultural atmosphere.[1]

Schaeffer in *The God Who Is There*,[2] alerted so many of us that the modern world had struck an unfair bargain with the church which reduces to this: We scientists, historians, philosophers, and the like get *knowledge* (where possible); you religious people may have *faith*, which is beyond "verification" (as Schaeffer used say). However, faith is left in the "upper story," as being subjective, personal, and irrelevant to the great philosophical issues of the day. In Stephen Carter's words, it is treated more as a personal, private hobby, than a truth claim about objective reality.[3] Hobbies are fine, but we do not impose them on the world; rather, they are idiosyncratic preferences. "To each his own."

Without using technological vocabulary, Schaeffer masterfully enunciates

the concept of biblical truth in a passage too long to quote here. The gist, however, is that "from the biblical viewpoint," truth is not ultimately related to orthodoxy, the Creeds, or even the Scriptures. Rather, the "Bible, the historic creeds and Orthodoxy are important because God is there, and finally, that is the only reason they have their importance."[4] In other words, Christianity is not simply a tradition of opinion (a matter of being faithful to a received body of teaching), it is true because of the God who makes it true. God is the ultimate truth-maker for the claims of orthodoxy, creeds, and the Bible itself.[5]

As a Christian philosopher, J. P. has done heroic and herculean work to reestablish Christianity as a knowledge tradition. He, along with Schaeffer, teaches that we do not separate faith and reason but rather, to use Schaeffer's image, we develop a "circle of knowledge" under "the Lordship of Christ." Part II of J. P.'s significant work, *The Kingdom Triangle* is dedicated to restoring knowledge to the Christian worldview and to the world at large.[6] A few words on the very meaning of knowledge are in order, given the controversy over that topic in philosophical literature.

If subject S has knowledge of proposition P, then:

(1) S believes that P is true. That is, one's propositional attitude[7] is not that of wondering or guessing or questioning or the like.
(2) P is true. That is, it aligns with objective reality; in other words, it is factual (the correspondence view of truth).
(3) S has sufficient justification for the truth of P. This justification lends rational credence to P. One need not (but may) possess proof to have sufficient justification to know that P is true. That is, any statement of a contingent (as opposed to a necessary) truth is defeasible. It *could* be wrong, but this does not threaten its status as knowledge.

This is an attempt to sketch out the internalist position on knowledge. J.P and I take it to be the best candidate, biblical and philosophically, despite some challenges.[8] Rather than defending the view here against externalism, let us consider some implications for Christianity as a knowledge tradition. First, Christian truth claims may be items of public knowledge, not merely warranted personal beliefs.[9] One can and should bring the Christian worldview into the world of ideas at every level, since justification for its defining beliefs is available to the earnestly questioning soul. Further, one can do so without undue fear and with

hope of philosophical success. While externalists often are content with claiming knowledge that is not defeated by any known facts, internalists tend to be optimistic about defending their claims *as true*, not simply as rationally permitted.[10] This is what J. P. calls "strong rationality" (S is rationally obliged to believe P) as opposed to "weak rationality" (S is rationally permitted to believe P, but X may be rationally permitted to believe not-P).[11]

Second, it seems that internalism has a natural connection to virtue epistemology, although I have not seen this rigorously developed in the literature. The reasoning is straightforward. If the knowing subject, S, needs justification for knowledge, then S needs to exercise herself properly to attain that justification. So, "S believes P," while a simple analytical statement, in the world of flesh, blood, and spirit involves the whole person and how she comports herself with respect to knowledge.[12] In some cases, justification is automatic and requires no epistemic virtue. For example, in 1945, Hitler could *know* he was the leader of Nazi Germany without being a *virtuous* knower. However, matters of ultimate concern often involve virtues such as studiousness, patience, humility, and more. In fact, J. P. addresses this profoundly in his account of the cognitive virtues of Christian life.[13] Pascal's programmatic statement from *Pensées* puts this masterfully:

> I should, therefore, like to arouse in man the desire to find truth, to be ready, free from passion, to follow it wherever he may find it, realizing how far his knowledge is clouded by passions. I should like him to hate his concupiscence [lustful desire] which automatically makes his decisions for him, so that it should not blind him when he makes his choice, nor hinder him once he has chosen.[14]

Jesus, it seems, drives home the same truth when He says: "Anyone who chooses to do the will of God will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own" (John 7:17).[15]

Andreas Köstenberger has written a superb book on the virtues required for intellectual excellence in scholarship. Although he does not interact with the tradition of virtue (classic and theological), he identifies several deeply biblical values pertinent to the pursuit of truth in scholarship. He employs three categories of virtue:

Category 1: Vocational Excellence: Diligence, courage, passion, restraint, creativity, eloquence.

Category 2: Moral Excellence: Integrity, fidelity, wisdom.

Category 3: Relational Excellence: Grace, humility, interdependence, love.[16]

Before laying out some of J. P.'s contributions and adding a few ideas of my own, let me relate an anecdote that helps capture the man and his passion. At the 2003 meetings of the Evangelical Philosophical Society, I invited J. P. and three other scholars to respond to my recently published book, *On Jesus*. This was only fitting, since J. P.'s work on Jesus as a philosopher in *Love Your God with All Your Mind* had inspired much of my book, which was put out by a secular publisher. The other respondents made astute and helpful comments about my work. J. P.'s approach was different. He said in essence, "This is a terrific and important work. Now let's think of ways to make Jesus' worldview public knowledge." Offering no criticisms of *On Jesus*, he went on to imagine ways to bring Jesus' message to the world in philosophical categories. This is vintage J. P. Moreland, "redeeming the time" in a gracious and kingdom-oriented manner (Ephesians 5:16 KJV).

I will mention a few areas and then apply this program to an area where J.P has not ventured forth in any great detail: the philosophy of technology.

J. P., while a distinguished academic, began his ministry in evangelism and church planting. This gave him a hands-on and up-close perspective on the life of the church in America today. Many academics lack this experience. In fact, J. P. has continued to speak at churches and writes books both at the high academic level (such as *Universals*[17]) and more for the layperson (*The God Question*[18]). However, the books are never dumbed down, nor the arguments oversimplified. This is a rare gift to the church and the world. It helps insinuate Christianity as a knowledge tradition at various intellectual levels so as to reach different communities of knowers. Furthermore, those impressed with one of J. P.'s more popular books may well develop a hunger for his more sophisticated work.

However, evangelicals (but not J. P.) have often mistakenly thought that by simply equipping the layperson with a biblical worldview, they can renew culture. This is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for major social change. James Hunter persuasively argues in *To Change the World*[19] that deep societal change only comes as elite and influential institutions change their outlook and impact on the world. Evangelicals have been fairly good at reaching popular culture—areas such as pop music, charismatic preachers, and Christian self-help books (if that is not a contradiction)—but have failed to make a significant mark

at the higher intellectual levels of American culture. These cultural gatekeepers or "reality policeman" (Ayn Rand) are far more secularized than the general public, and generally set the tone for law, politics, and science. This led sociologist Peter Berger to remark years ago that America is like a greater population of religious East Indians ruled by an elite of secularized Swedes.

In *Love Your God with All Your Mind*, J. P. tells a story that illustrates this distressing lack of social influence by evangelicals. After winning the presidential election in 1980, President Reagan contacted Bill Bright, founder and then head of Campus Crusade for Christ. The President, who was a Christian, wanted to know what evangelical Christians he might appoint to his Cabinet. Dr. Bright, one of the most well-connected evangelicals of the day, could think of only one man: Dr. C. Everett Koop, a noted pediatric surgeon and pro-life advocate, who co-starred with Francis Schaeffer in the film series "Whatever Happened to the Human Race?" (1979) and co-wrote the book of the same title.[20] Koop went on to serve with distinction as Surgeon General for two terms. However, it is a sad testimony to the evangelical world that Bill Bright could only produce one person, however outstanding he was.[21]

To rectify this problem, J. P. set this goal for the Master's Degree in Philosophy at Talbot School of Theology, started in 1992: to place their graduates into the best PhD programs such that one hundred of their students would become Professors of Philosophy in colleges and universities around the country. As a philosophy professor, who has taught at both secular and religious institutions, I know the power of the profession, despite the ridicule it sometimes receives for being impractical, idiosyncratic, and abstruse. As psychiatrist and holocaust survivor, Victor Frankl (1905–1997), wrote, "The gas chambers of Auschwitz, Treblinka, and Maidanek were ultimately prepared not in some ministry or other in Berlin, but rather at the desks and in the lecture halls of nihilistic scientists and philosophers."[22] Talbot has produced many top-notch philosophers and continues at full strength. Over ten years ago, *Christianity Today* featured their program in a main article.[23] Since then, Biola University has expanded their outreach by adding a very popular MA in Christian Apologetics as well.

In fact, a philosopher who sides more with the continental style of philosophizing than the analytical method advanced at Talbot once accused me of being part of the "Talbot school of philosophy," in that we did not praise or try to appropriate postmodernism for the Christian cause, and insisted on rational clarity in

our argumentation.[24] Although I have even never spoken at Talbot, I considered this high (if a bit misguided) praise.[25]

While J. P. has made significant contributions to metaphysics, apologetics, the spiritual life, philosophy of science, ethics, and more, to my knowledge, he has not written on the philosophy of technology. To advance the discussion of his idea of Christianity as a knowledge tradition, we will take up this often neglected topic in the spirit of J. P.'s astute intellectual endeavors.

PHILOSOPHY OF TECHNOLOGY

Christians have always been leaders in distributing knowledge. Jesus came to make the Father known (John 1:18); the gospel is good news; and the Bible is a collection of books containing the knowledge of God, morality, the afterlife and much more. No other religion has emphasized teaching as strongly as Christianity. Further, this teaching is not optional for the human race or to the mission of God (*missio dei*). Consider a well-known passage:

> Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matt. 28:18–20)

Since Jesus endorsed the truth *and knowability* of the Hebrew Bible (Matt. 5:17–20) and anticipated the apostolic authority of the New Testament (John 14:26),[26] the Great Commission means that Christians should teach the whole Bible to the whole world, such that the nations obey the one true God. No small matter, that. This grand and daunting program requires the use of every legitimate means of communication in service of discipleship. However, one must use the right means in the right way if knowledge is going to be known, maintained, and applied to the whole of life under the Lordship of Christ. In that light, consider this saying of Jesus related to the Great Commission mentioned above.

> But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. (Acts 1:8)

This witness to the entire world must be Spirit-led, if we are to obey Jesus. Jesus said three times in His farewell address in John that the Holy Spirit, who would come in greater power after Jesus' ascension, was "the Spirit of truth" (John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13). Christian witness requires the teaching of truth *according to the Spirit of truth*. This holy endeavor requires far more than mere information dissemination. The means of communication in the ancient (premodern) world of the Bible were limited to word of mouth, public addresses, and writing—and, of course, any supernatural means at God's disposal, such as dreams, visions, and providential acts.

Things are more complicated now, as we face a plethora of information dispensing devices, many of which are interlinked (often in mysterious ways, and even against our will).[27] The pivotal difference between now and then is electrification. When units of semantic meaning (or information) are conveyed through electric means, several things change radically.

First, information travels far more quickly. Before the telegraph, the fastest communication traveled was the speed of a train; and before the train, a horse. The train, unlike the horse, was a mechanical means of conveyance, but it was not electrified. The information it may have carried was still bound to *itself* not translatable into an electronic form. But through the telegraph—and later the telephone, radio, television, Internet, and so on—the message is translated into data, which become information at its destination.

Second, electrified information is more easily *available*. A book may be loaned to a friend or checked out of a library, but it cannot be two or more places at once. Most everything on the Internet can be viewed or downloaded at the same time. While unelectronic speech can only be heard by a relatively small number of people, the microphone and speakers broaden the range of the voice; radio extends the reach even further. The human voice, when augmented, becomes more accessible to more people.

Third, electronic communication lends itself to *convergence* more than unelectronic. Before electronic media, one might read from a book in public, thus combining speech with writing. But with electronic media, a multitude of convergences are possible.[28] A smart phone can provide textual messages, static images, moving images, take photographs, record sounds, and so on.

Fourth, electronic media allows for the vast and uncontrolled spread of images. The near ubiquitous profusion of electronically mediated and distributed

images—through films, television, and the Internet—tends to dominate or subordinate the word (textual communication) to the image (graphic communication). Any electronic communication medium is used for its distinctive features. Therefore, films, television, and video in all its forms emphasize what nonvisual media cannot do: present images.

Although many other elements of electronic communication could be cited and discussed, these four are obviously true but have unobvious effects on our acquisition, retention, and application of *knowledge*. But, sadly, many are oblivious to how the medium affects the message. Thus, to cite Marshall McLuhan, too many "sleepwalk through history." Christians, of all people, should not be thus stupefied—especially given the many warnings in Scripture about avoiding worldliness and embracing godliness.

> For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age. (Titus 2:11–12)

We should also consider the principles of the following passages in relation to our task of preserving Christianity as a knowledge tradition, in the age of mediated communication:

> Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress *and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.* (James 1:27, emphasis mine)

> He [Jesus] said to them, "You are the ones who justify yourselves in the eyes of others, but God knows your hearts. *What people value highly is detestable in God's sight.* (Luke 16:15, emphasis mine)

While these and other texts (such as 1 John 2:15–17; Rom. 12:1–2) do not specifically address means of communication, they do assume the principle that worldliness should be shunned. Theologian David Wells helpfully defines worldliness as:

> that system of values, in any given age, which has at its center our fallen human perspective, which displaces God and his truth from the world, and **which makes sin look normal and righteousness seem strange.** It thus gives great plausibility to what is morally wrong and, for that reason, makes what is wrong seem normal.[29]

Worldliness is not limited to obvious principles or choices concerning marriage or money. Worldliness can creep into our unconscious usage of accepted technologies, such that the knowledge of what matters most (God and His kingdom) is muted—even as information flows freely and ferociously. How can this be? Let us return to the four factors of electronic information and exegete them with respect to treating Christianity as a knowledge tradition.

First, the speed at which technology travels has its benefits for knowledge. Recently, I learned something through a brief Skype exchange that merited immediate prayer and financial giving. Here the rapid acquisition of knowledge was salutatory. Further, for apologetics, I often use the Internet to attempt to answer people's questions or to direct them to books, articles, or trustworthy Internet resources. In some cases, there is a pressing need that is time-sensitive, so the rapidity of exchange matters. However, all technological "advances" (as we unthinkingly say) have a downside. And, as Jacques Ellul wrote long ago,[30] every technology introduces new problems; none are panaceas; none will generate utopia. This ease and speed of access can fool us into thinking that there is a quick and simple answer to everything. While Google is a lightning fast search engine, its algorithm for number sources is by no means a hierarchy of objective value. The first hit on Google search is likely not the best source for knowledge (justified true belief), but rather the most popular given the (mysterious) Google metric. Information, in the digital world, is easy to receive, but knowledge easily and often drowns in a rushing flood of information. Therefore, if we prize knowledge over mere information acquisition (or what Plato called "opinion"), we should be aware of this temptation to put speed over accuracy. Attaining knowledge often requires slow and protracted study, and the cognitive virtues required. Further, we are responsible to God for what we should know. The writer of Hebrews corrected his readers along these lines:

> We have much to say about this, but it is hard to make it clear to you because you no longer try to understand. In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil. (Heb. 5:11–14)

Second, our ease of access to information is a two-sided coin as well. In writing this paper, I was able to capture many Scripture verses online. This is easier and faster than entering the texts manually. (However, I first learned of most of these texts from Bibles.) Further, many rich resources for knowledge are readily available online, such as *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. However, one can just as easily instantly consult a Wikipedia entry. If one used Google to find a topic, it is likely that Wikipedia will come up first or second in the search. While Wikipedia contains much truth, it is difficult to *know* what is true and what is false, given the nature of the medium. The entries are not peer-reviewed (as are those in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*); in fact, there is no reliable editorial control. Moreover, the content is subject to constant change. A Wikipedia article at time T1 may say P and at T2 say not-P. This technological malleability decreases its reliability. If we want to develop intellectual virtue before God, in order to offer Christianity as a knowledge tradition, we ought to be aware that ease of access is not the same thing as knowledge. Thus, we must take heed of Paul who warned of those who are "always learning but never able to come to a knowledge of the truth" (2 Tim. 3:7).

Third, the convergence of technologies may aid in acquiring knowledge because we can unify different perspectives through the combination of media. For example, if I read a reliable online article on an event and then watch some video related to that event, I may increase my knowledge. If I know someone who was there, I may talk to them about it on my phone. All of these means of access can be contained in a smart phone, which is also portable. Or one may read an article on epistemology by J. P. online, and then watch a video lecture of similar material on YouTube. This is good. On the other hand, convergence can lead to distraction. One can easily jump from one form of communication to the other with little comprehension. One may surf instead of seeking truth. Most technology users, I wager, are better at surfing and scanning than focusing their collection of convergent media on attaining significant knowledge. Let those who converge beware and be aware.

Fourth, the availability of images through technologies can augment our lives and increase the knowledge of God in some areas. I recently did a lecture through Skype on apologetics to a group who could not afford to have me come in person. However, I was using the medium primarily for its audio value, not for any special effects or for any image other than me talking in front of my computer. Also, well-

done films may harmonize the image with the word. Schaeffer's film series "How Should We Then Live?" gives a Christian perspective on the development and decline of Western civilization and aids the attentive viewer in acquiring knowledge about God and the world. Nevertheless, those who saw the film and did not read the accompanying book missed what only a protracted engagement with the text can provide.[31]

If we are to honor and submit to the Spirit of Truth in furthering Christianity as not a mere tradition, or worse yet, a hobby, but as a true, rational, pertinent and life-giving reality, we must attend earnestly not only to the *content* of our message, but the *means* by which we articulate and insinuate that matchless message. We must not allow the torrent of digital data to bury the pearl of great price in a field of unrelated facts, related falsehoods, or vain imaginations. Rather, we are called to exegete every technology as to its ability to instill the knowledge of God in a culturally aware, philosophically alert, and Spirit-led manner (1 Thess. 5:12–23). And we should never forget the irreducible value of face-to-face teaching and learning. As John said,

> I have much to write to you, but I do not want to use paper and ink. Instead, I hope to visit you and talk with you face to face, so that our joy may be complete. (2 John 1:12; see also Rom. 1:11–12)

By the grace of God, J. P. Moreland has brought the joy of truth to many, both in person and through his writings and technological outreach. Let us follow him (as he follows Christ) in furthering Christianity as a knowledge tradition so that we and others may take "captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ" (2 Cor. 10:5).

Notes

1. For a superb account of the life and ministry of Schaeffer, read Colin Duriez, *Francis Schaeffer: An Authentic Life* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2008). See also J. P. Moreland's introduction to Francis Schaeffer, *Escape from Reason*, 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006).
2. Francis A. Schaeffer, *The God Who Is There*, 30th anniversary ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1998). Nancy Pearcey develops these ideas thoroughly and clearly in *Total Truth* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2005). For in-depth and philosophical account of the concept of a worldview, see David K. Naugle, *Worldview: The History of a Concept* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002).

3. Stephen Carter, *The Culture of Disbelief: How American Law and Politics Trivialize Religious Devotion* (New York: Anchor Books, 1993).
4. Schaeffer, *The God Who Is There*, 177.
5. This notion of "tradition" differs radically from that propounded by Alasdair MacIntyre in *After Virtue*, 3rd ed. (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007).
6. J. P. Moreland, *Kingdom Triangle* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007), especially chapter 5, "The Recovery of Knowledge." Of course, much of J. P.'s work (perhaps all of it) is dedicated to that end.
7. A propositional attitude is, roughly, the cognitive stance one takes toward a proposition or statement, such as belief, unbelief, suspending belief, hope, and so on.
8. For a more thorough explication and defense of this view see Part II of J. P. Moreland and William Lane Craig, *Philosophical Foundations for a Christian Worldview* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003). See also Douglas Geivett's contributions *to Christianity and the Postmodern Turn: Six Views*, ed. Myron B. Penner (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2005), particularly his essay, "Is God a Story?"
9. Consider Alvin Plantinga's externalist or reliabilist program in *Warranted Christian Belief* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000) and elsewhere. For a brief critique of this approach see Douglas Groothuis, *Christian Apologetics: Comprehensive Case for Biblical Faith* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2011), 64–68. My apologetic approach employs internalism, as does J. P.'s. See J. P. Moreland, *Scaling the Secular City* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1987), and the apologetics contained in *Philosophical Foundations* and elsewhere.
10. For example, Plantinga finishes his magnum opus, *Warranted Christian Belief* by confessing that philosophy cannot show that Christianity is true. It can only show that if it is true, one can be warranted in believing it on the conditions that Plantinga stipulates. See pages 498–99.
11. Moreland, *Scaling the Secular City*, 13.
12. Although I am reluctant to endorse Polanyi's whole epistemic program (partially, because it is daunting to interpret correctly), this point concerning the pertinence of the knowing subject in epistemology is thoroughly treated in Michael Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974); see also *The Tacit Dimension*, reissue ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009).
13. See the section "How to Develop a Mature Christian Mind" in *Love Your God with All Your Mind* (Colorado Springs, CO: Navpress, 1997), chaps. 4–5.
14. Blaise Pascal, *Pensées*, ed. Alban Krailsheimer (New York: Penguin Books, 1966), 119, 423. Pascal speaks of "choosing" the Christian religion.
15. I argue that Jesus endorsed virtue epistemology in "Jesus' Epistemology," in *On Jesus* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2003), chap. 5.
16. Andreas J. Köstenberger, *Excellence: The Character of God and the Pursuit of Scholar Virtue* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2011).
17. J. P. Moreland, *Universals* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001).
18. J. P. Moreland, *The God Question* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2008). This is a superb book to give the inquiring unbeliever.

19. James Davison Hunter, *To Change the World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).
20. Francis Schaeffer and C. Everett Koop, *Whatever Happened to the Human Race*? (New York: Fleming Revel, 1979).
21. J. P. Moreland, *Love Your God with All Your Mind*, 2nd ed. (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2012).
22. Victor Frankl, *The Doctor and the Soul* (New York: Vintage Books 1986), xxi.
23. Agnieszka Tennant, "Masters of Philosophy: How Biola University is making inroads in the larger philosophical world," *Christianity Today*, vol. 47, no. 6 (2003), 46–48.
24. See James K. A. Smith, "Who's Afraid of Postmodernism? A Response to the 'Biola School'," in *Christianity and the Postmodern Turn*, 226.
25. On postmodernism, see J. P. Moreland, "Truth, Contemporary Philosophy, and the Postmodern Turn," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 48 (2005): 77–88; *Kingdom Triangle*, chap. 3; Douglas Groothuis, *Truth Decay: Defending Christianity from the Challenges of Postmodernism* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000); Millard Erickson, *Truth or Consequences* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005).
26. For an explanation how this works, see Douglas Groothuis, *Christian Apologetics: A Comprehensive Case for Biblical Faith* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2011).
27. I do not directly address social media here, but see Douglas Groothuis, "Understanding Social Media," *Christian Research Journal*, vol. 33, no. 3 (2010): 18–25. See also, Douglas Groothuis, *The Soul in Cyberspace* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1997).
28. See Henry Jenkins, *Convergence Culture*, rev. ed. (New York: NYU Press, 2008).
29. David Wells, *Losing Our Virtue* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans 1998), 4.
30. Jacques Ellul, *The Technological Society* (New York: Vintage Books, 1967).
31. Francis A. Schaeffer, *How Should We Then Live?* (New York: Fleming Revel, 1976).

"Since What May Be Known about God Is Plain to Them": J. P. Moreland's Natural Theology

PAUL COPAN

I FIRST HEARD OF J. P. Moreland in January 1986, while I was a philosophy and theology student at Trinity Seminary in Deerfield, Illinois. My philosophy professors were Stuart Hackett and William Lane Craig, who themselves would come to have a significant influence in my life. While Bill Craig happened to be out of town, I was able to drop in on another of Bill's classes to watch a videotaped debate involving an atheist as well as a rising young Christian philosopher, who turned out to be none other than J. P. In this video, J. P.'s opponent was a dyed-in-the-wool verificationist, and J. P. thoroughly, though graciously, exposed this atheist's metaphysical undergarments and gave a superb array of arguments for God's existence and the uniqueness of Jesus of Nazareth.

Shortly after my graduation from Trinity in June 1988, I began to read J. P.'s book *Scaling the Secular City*.[1] I found J. P.'s book to be densely packed with thoughtful arguments on the New Testament's reliability, the resurrection of Jesus, and—less usual for apologetics books—the relationship of Christianity and science. The book also contained a cluster of arguments in defense of God's existence: the cosmological, teleological, and (to some extent) moral arguments, as well as the argument from mind and another on the meaning of life.[2] I was so impressed with J. P.'s command of the issues and his layout of the arguments that I typed up extensive

notes on most of the book—a handy summary of well-reasoned defenses of the Christian faith that served as an aid in my own thinking and ministry early on.

In light of the God-science discussion in *Scaling the Secular City*, I began to explore J. P.'s second book, *Christianity and the Nature of Science*.[3] The philosophy of science was fairly new territory for me, but J. P. proved a helpful guide. (I would later draw on this book for my PhD philosophy of science course at Marquette University.) The following year I started to read J. P.'s debate book with atheist philosopher Kai Nielsen, *Does God Exist?*—a fascinating interchange on natural theological arguments, pro and con. In this exchange, J. P. proved himself more than capable in responding to his opponent(s) once again.[4]

During this time, I was on the pastoral staff of a church in Schenectady, New York, and I invited J. P. Moreland to do a series of talks at our church and an outreach event held at a nearby school. J. P. came gladly, and this was the beginning of our friendship that has continued for over twenty years. We have served together as officers in the Evangelical Philosophical Society (EPS), and have teamed up as conference speakers and on various book projects.[5] Moreover, J. P. has been an amazing source of personal encouragement to me over the years. He has been a public champion for the kingdom of God, and he has deeply affected my life and the lives of so many others over the years through his faithful service.

I have taken a bit of extra space here to highlight the influence that J. P.'s thinking, example, and encouragement have had on me in very tangible ways. In light of the debt of gratitude I owe him, it is truly an honor for me to explore the features of J. P.'s natural theology and his contribution to the literature.

UNDERSTANDING NATURAL THEOLOGY

Biblical Texts

Psalm 19—the most beautiful of poems, according to C. S. Lewis—makes plain that the glory of God is revealed in the natural world:

> The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands.
> Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they reveal knowledge.
> They have no speech, they use no words; no sound is heard from them. (Psalm 19:1–3).

Likewise, Romans 1:19–20 indicates that evidence for God's existence and various attributes are abundantly available:

> Since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.

In Acts 14, Paul tells his pagan audience at Lystra that God "did not leave Himself without witness" in providing rain, fruitful seasons, and the enjoyment of food and life itself (v. 17 NASB). A marvelous—but often overlooked—passage that relates to natural theology is found in Isaiah 28:23–29 (NASB):

> Give ear and hear my voice,
> Listen and hear my words.
> Does the farmer plow continually to plant seed?
> Does he continually turn and harrow the ground?
> Does he not level its surface
> And sow dill and scatter cummin
> And plant wheat in rows,
> Barley in its place and rye within its area?
> For his God instructs and teaches him properly.
> For dill is not threshed with a threshing sledge,
> Nor is the cartwheel driven over cummin;
> But dill is beaten out with a rod, and cummin with a club.
> Grain for bread is crushed,
> Indeed, he does not continue to thresh it forever.
> Because the wheel of his cart and his horses eventually damage it,
> He does not thresh it longer.
> This also comes from the Lord of hosts,
> Who has made His counsel wonderful and His wisdom great.

The Scriptures make clear that something of God's existence and nature is manifested in the natural world and in the human heart—or as the philosopher Immanuel Kant phrased it, "The starry heavens above me and the moral law within me."[6]

The Project of Natural Theology

J. P. offers robust arguments for God's existence! With Bill Craig, he coedited *The Blackwell Companion to Natural Theology*, which has come to be recognized by

many as the gold standard for natural theology. In this volume, they define natural theology as "that branch of theology that seeks to provide warrant for belief in God's existence apart from the resources of authoritative, propositional revelation."[7] *Natural* theology, of course, is distinguished from *revealed* theology. Natural theology is anchored in and derived from natural revelation—that is, God's self-revelation through nature, reason, conscience, and human experience. By contrast, revealed theology is anchored in special revelation—in the Scriptures and the incarnate Son of God, Jesus of Nazareth.

Of course, when we are speaking of God, we mean a God with specific great-making qualities—a worship-worthy being suited to the title "God." In the spirit of Thomas Aquinas's "Five Ways," J. P. would say, "This everyone understands to be God." So, the gods of the Greco-Roman world were all too human and morally compromised to fit the bill. And J. P. does not simply argue to a property-less "Ultimate Reality"—an ultimately incoherent notion such as the philosopher of religion John Hick held. Nor are we referring to an impersonal Eastern version of Brahman ("God"), nor the undifferentiated oneness (monism) of Advaita Vedanta Hinduism (*nirguna brahman*), nor Ramanuja's pantheistic version of differentiation within oneness (*saguna brahman*).

Though still not specific enough to give us the God of the Bible, the ontological argument for a Greatest Conceivable Being of Anselm attempts to argue for a more robust understanding of God than do the other, more-modest natural theological arguments. A cosmological argument can help show that a powerful (not necessarily all-powerful) being exists, and a design argument can point to the existence of an intelligent (not necessarily omniscient) being. The biblical God would certainly fit the picture, but that is not the project of natural theology. We can even strengthen the case for God by *combining* various arguments for God's existence to move us in this direction of greater specificity. But natural theology, by definition, recognizes the need for special revelation to give greater specificity to who the Creator and Designer is.[8]

"Proofs" for God's Existence

Does this mean that God's existence cannot be denied? Are natural theological arguments demonstrative "proofs" for God's existence? J. P. says that this is the wrong question, since the notion of proof sets too high a standard—a standard entailing no possibility of being mistaken. This kind of proof, he argues, "is so

rare that it is almost impossible to think of an example that satisfies it. About all I can come up with is proof in logic and math. . . But even here, there will be dissenters." Besides, he adds, "We all have more than adequate grounds for believing many things that fail to live up to the proof standard."[9] So, though we could be mistaken, we can be confident about what we had for breakfast this morning, that 1+1=2, that other minds or persons exist, and a host of similar beliefs.

Rather than using "proofs," J. P.'s argumentation for God's existence utilizes a "cumulative case inference to the best explanation."[10] The inference to the best explanation will identify a relevant range of evidence or data to be explained, formulate a pool of possible explanations, and determine which explanation is the best of the lot. In making his case, J. P. identifies "a range of factual data that find their best explanation by far in the existence of a single, personal God."[11] In terms of a cumulative case, this occurs when "several independent strands of evidence to support the same conclusion" come together.[12] So, even if one line of evidence is insufficient to warrant a conclusion, the combination of the various multiple strands of evidence can do so.

Naturalism and God's Existence

Natural theological arguments can be utilized to argue for a personal, intrinsically good, intelligent, and powerful Creator (theism/monotheism). As we'll see below, J. P. recognizes that natural theology has implications for nontheistic versions of the Ultimate Reality—say, in process theism and in Eastern religions and philosophies such as Buddhism. As the Eastern philosophy and Asian religions scholar Ninian Smart has observed, the "Western [i.e., theistic] concept of the importance of the historical process is largely foreign to these [Eastern] faiths," adding that "the notion of a personal God is altogether less prominent."[13]

However, most of J. P.'s natural theological firepower is directed at the philosophical commitments of naturalism, which dominates the academy in the West. In J. P.'s writings, he frequently describes naturalism as having three major features.[14] First, its view of *reality* (metaphysics) is that matter is all that exists, and that all of reality—space, time, and matter—originated with the Big Bang. Second, its view of *causation* (etiology) is that all events are physically determined by prior physical events going all the way back to the Big Bang. Third, its view of *knowledge* (epistemology) is that the only (or best) way to know is through the scientific method; scientism (not "science") expresses the

epistemological aspect of naturalism.

Naturalism's Grand Story (metanarrative) has four features: (1) an atomic theory of matter and a theory of unguided evolution (thus involving bottom-up, rather than top-down, causal explanations); (2) philosophical monism (everything that exists is fundamentally matter); (3) the conjunction of the atomic theory of matter and the theory of unguided evolution, implying that genuine substances do not exist (substances integrate functioning parts, endure through change, and have a nature possessed by members of their natural kinds); and (4) all existence is bound up with the space-time world.

J. P.'s natural theological project includes a steady stream of books (authored and edited) and articles arguing against the pretensions and problems of naturalism in its various—though ultimately monistic—expressions.

ARGUMENTS FROM NATURAL THEOLOGY

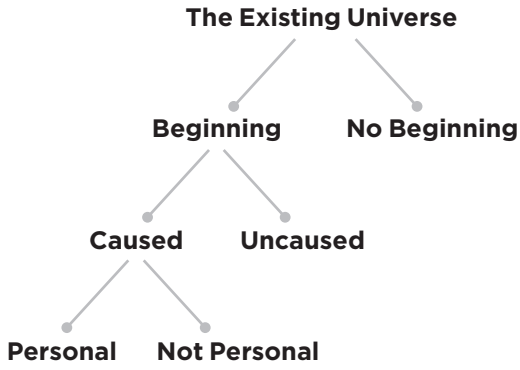
What are some of the natural theological arguments J. P. has utilized in his calling as a scholar and author? I will focus on three of them: the cosmological and teleological arguments, and the argument from mind.

Cosmological Argument

There are three major versions of the cosmological argument: the Thomistic, Leibnizian, and *kalam* arguments. J. P. has focused on the *kalam* version (*kalam* is an Arabic word, meaning "speech"). The argument maintains that the universe began to exist a finite time ago, and that an infinite series of past events is impossible.[15] The universe's beginning is best explained by a personal Creator. The argument moves through a series of disjuncts to show this:

The universe either began to exist or it has always existed.
If it had a beginning, the beginning was either caused or uncaused.
If the beginning was caused, it was either personal or not personal.

The disjuncts can be broken down this way:



The argument begins with the assumption that the universe exists—an obvious fact we need not question. Yes, there are some schools of thought that would deny the reality of a mind-independent universe, saying that it is an illusion. However, there is no good reason at all to deny what seems so obvious to us and embrace what strikes us as so counterintuitive and contrary to our daily experience. So, given the universe's existence, did it begin or not? J. P. notes that there are philosophical reasons to challenge the infinity of the past. For example, if the series of past events were infinite, then it would be impossible to traverse the past, and we could never have arrived at today. Furthermore, it is absurd to say that the series of past events could be numbered up to infinity; that would mean that we would have exhausted all the natural numbers (1, 2, 3. . .). What's more, there are also scientific supports for the universe's beginning—the universe's expansion as indicated by the red-shift of light from distant galaxies, as well as its running out of usable energy by the second law of thermodynamics. J. P. challenges the notion that the universe is not subject to the second law of thermodynamics and is thus beyond the reach of science. If that were the case, the universe becomes more like a nonphysical reality that could be discussed only metaphysically. But there is no reason for such maneuvers, since every part of the universe—and thus the whole—is inescapably subject to the second law.

The fact, then, is that the universe came into existence a finite time ago, bringing about an alteration from a changeless state to a changing one. Time does not exist without events or happenings. And if time came into existence from a changeless state, this would imply that a personal agent brought it into existence (agent-state causation), as opposed to a set of pre-existing quiescent physical conditions

(state-state causation). So, if there once existed a timeless, changeless state, then a personal, free being must have instantiated the first event.[16]

Design Argument

J. P. has been an advocate for the teleological argument in its varying hues.[17] For example, when we consider the universe's orderly arrangement in, say, orbiting planets or changing seasons, we can detect basic patterns in keeping with nature's laws that reflect a rational Mind behind them. Indeed, these very laws raise the question: Are these laws just brute givens, or do they serve as evidence for a rational Creator? According to J. P., because a range of arguments from design exist, even if one of these may be strongly criticized, others may be left untouched. What about the question of evolution? J. P.'s strategy here is to keep the main thing the main thing. Ultimately, evolution doesn't really affect many aspects of this argument.

What are these design arguments? J. P. points to *four* such arguments: *beauty*, *irreducible complexity*, *specified complexity*, and *biological information*. First, the beauty of the Rockies, a tropical sunset, or Vermont fall foliage cannot be accounted for in terms of survival value. Beauty has a transcendent quality, pointing to something beyond rather than being reducible to an arrangement of molecules. Second, the irreducible complexity argument states that certain parts (say, those of a cell) must all work together simultaneously to function at all; to remove any one part causes the cell's integrity to fail. Design best accounts for such simultaneous interworkings.

Third, design is suggested by specified complexity. The likelihood that the four heads on Mt. Rushmore were created by erosion is virtually nil (complexity), and we detect the images of four US Presidents (specified)—a clear indication of design. Likewise, we can see specified complexity in the eye, the heart, or the cell. The atheist Richard Dawkins himself notes that biology studies things that appear to be designed for a purpose but are not. If an organism appears designed, then why could it not *actually* have been designed? Science can't tell us that it isn't; this is a metaphysical judgment. Fourth, the argument from biological information states that living organisms contain not only order but information, such as DNA. And information can only come from a rational being. After all, if we observe in the sand this sequence of letters—JOHN LOVES MARY—but this is merely the result of natural forces like erosion, then it is meaningless. And

we know that information exists independent of and prior to the arrangement of parts, which suggests the information must have been imposed on these parts by a Mind.

Though J. P. is no evolutionist, he rightly argues that if evolution is true, we have here a most amazing example of design and thus an argument for God's existence. God is not only the final cause (creating the process with an end or aim in mind) but also the efficient cause (that by which the change is wrought). What's more, even apart from evolution, there are other areas suggesting design such as the existence of beauty, natural laws, and cosmic singularities that make a life-permitting universe possible. If we were called upon to decide between a chance universe and a "rigged" one to account for the specific cosmic "deal of cards" we observe, we should opt for the rigged one. That is, the theistic background makes better sense of this particular arrangement than a naturalistic/chance alternative.

Argument from Mind/Consciousness

In J. P.'s book *The Recalcitrant Imago Dei* (I love this title!), he highlights five irreducible features of human nature and experience that reflect the image of God: *consciousness and the mental*, *free will*, *rationality*, *unified selves*, and *intrinsic equal value/rights*. The existence of these features in human persons is exactly what we would expect if we are the creation of the God of Christian theism—a personal spirit Being that is supremely good, conscious, intelligent, and free. By contrast, a naturalistic metaphysic—that is, matter directed by deterministic, mechanical, valueless, nonconscious, undesigned processes—is utterly inadequate to account for these features.[18]

I'll highlight one of these arguments for God's existence—the one from consciousness. J. P.'s monograph on the argument from consciousness, *Consciousness and the Existence of God: A Theistic Argument*, persuasively argues that consciousness is best explained by the existence of a conscious Being.[19]

J. P. argues that the emergence of consciousness cannot be accounted for by a rearrangement of matter. Conscious/subjective experience is radically distinct from the stuff of matter—a point which a number of naturalists like Colin McGinn and John Searle readily admit. Indeed, the emergence of consciousness in a material world without God looks more like creation out of nothing than an emergent property. To simply appeal to the emergence of consciousness based

on an organism's achieving a certain level of complexity is, he argues, a label and not an explanation.

What are these mental states that are so discontinuous with matter? He gives six key features:[20]

(1) There is a raw qualitative feel or a "what it is like" to have a mental state such as pain;
(2) Many mental states have intentionality—*ofness* or *aboutness*—directed toward an object (e.g., a thought is *about* the moon);
(3) Mental states are inner, private, and immediate to the subject having them—mental states necessarily owned and unified by an "I" or a self;
(4) Mental states fail to have crucial features (e.g., spatial extension, location) that characterize physical states and, in general, cannot be described using physical language;
(5) Mental states are constituted by qualitatively simple properties (e.g., being a pain or a sensation of red), but physical states are constituted by quantitative, structural properties (e.g., being a C-fiber firing);
(6) Libertarian free acts exemplify an active power and not passive liability.

Using the inference to the best explanation for these features of consciousness, J. P. concludes that, on theism, such phenomena are natural and "hardly surprising." By contrast, naturalism gives us no reason to think that consciousness should emerge given its materialistic ontology and mechanistic etiology.[21]

The discussion of consciousness naturally leads to the topic of substance dualism. J. P. is a robust defender of substance dualism. The version he defends is the more integrated, organic, "functional holistic" Aristotelian–Thomistic view, not the more compartmentalized version of René Descartes. Unfortunately, naturalistic materialists tend to avoid sophisticated versions of substance dualism, instead preferring to attack a metaphysical strawman.[22] As J. P. notes in his book on consciousness, substance dualism is not at home in a naturalistic world because it seems to suggest a transcendent—indeed, supernatural—realm, and this is a key reason he thinks that many naturalists resist it so strongly. Most naturalists cling tenaciously to their materialism—what he calls *hylomania*—largely because of their *pneumatophobia* or fear of the spirit/soul. J. P. documents how many naturalistic philosophers of mind either ignore or refuse to engage the most sophisticated versions of substance dualism. For example, they don't even

include such works in their bibliography. In other cases, they merely beat up on Descartes's problematic version of dualism.[23]

Further, J. P. is troubled by a number of Christian philosophers who have embraced materialism, which he considers a capitulation to the spirit of the age.[24] At a meeting of the American Academy of Religion sponsored by the EPS, J. P. directly asked fellow-panelist and Christian materialist Kevin Corcoran whether he thought that Jesus and Paul were substance dualists, and Corcoran readily acknowledged that they were.[25] This is a sad irony indeed—not only because of the dualist position of Jesus and other biblical writers,[26] but also because materialism itself has been in decline over the past fifty years or so.[27]

J. P. utilizes an argument for the soul—that is, the "self" or the "I"—against the process theologian, which would also apply to the Buddhist *no-self* doctrine (*anatman*). Both these views deny an enduring self that maintains absolute identity through change. The self is nothing more than a series of *interrelated actual occasions*, a stream of consciousness—like old celluloid films (which have discrete, though unconnected, frames) or like a flickering candle. J. P. argues that this view is intuitively implausible. "In successive moments of experience, I not only have an awareness of those successive experiences, but I am also aware of an "I" which is identical in each moment and which is identical to my current self."[28] I (= my soul) am a self-identifying unity; I don't find myself to be a succession of units. "I" am not a bundle of properties. If that were the case, how could change take place? After all, change presupposes sameness, and the nature of a substance is that it *endures* despite changes in its properties.

NATURAL THEOLOGY ON NAPKINS

According to the noted Christian philosopher Alvin Plantinga, the term *popularizer* is commonly disdained among academics. Despite this, he urges Christian scholars not to leave their work "buried away in professional journals,"[29] but to make it available to the broader Christian community to help them think Christianly and to work through their intellectual questions: "If [Christian philosophers] devote their best efforts to the topics fashionable in the non-Christian philosophical world, they will neglect a crucial and central part of their task as Christian philosophers."[30]

J. P. has been committed to this "crucial and central part" of his task. He has not only written works of natural theology that are academic and densely argued,

but he has also made these arguments accessible to the thoughtful lay Christian. And he has done so in such a way that Christians can apply these arguments in everyday conversations with unbelievers. For example, in his book *The God Conversation: Using Stories and Illustrations to Explain Your Faith*,[31] coauthored with Tim Muehlhoff, J. P. talks about the astronomer Donald Page's calculations of the odds of a life-permitting universe as being 1 out of $10^{10(123)}$. J. P. notes that, unless one has a PhD in mathematics, such numbers will seem meaningless. If you wrote out on a napkin during lunch what 10^{18} would look like, it would be 1000000000000000000. Now, the number of subatomic particles in the entire universe is around 10^{80}! That number is a mere trifle compared to the staggering odds of a life-permitting universe.

Now, to help your friend grasp what 1 out of $10^{10(123)}$ looks like, grab a new napkin and start writing down a one followed by zero after zero after zero: "As you explain to your friend how unimaginable this number is, keep writing as you speak. Tell your friend that if you started writing this number from when the universe began [13.7 billion years ago], you *still would not* be finished."[32]

Given the breathtaking odds against a life-permitting universe, it seems that an *irrational fear* is what prevents the atheist from considering a supernatural intellect behind it all. In giving an assessment, J. P. cites Peter Kreeft: "At this point, we need a psychological explanation of the atheist rather than a logical explanation of the universe."[33]

J. P. not only outlines practical suggestions for readers, he has done plenty of hands-on natural theology himself. I frequently tell one of J. P.'s stories—an encounter with a relativistic student at the University of Vermont. J. P. was speaking in a dorm room, and a student who lived there told J. P., "Whatever is true for you is true for you and whatever is true for me is true for me. If something works for you because you believe it, that's great. But no one should force his or her views on other people since everything is relative."[34] J. P. pointed out to him that, if so, there was no such thing as wrongdoing. To drive this home, as J. P. was leaving, he unplugged the student's stereo and started to walk out the door with it.

The student protested: "Hey, what are you doing? . . . . You can't do that!"

J. P. replied, "You're not going to *force* on me the belief that it is wrong to steal your stereo, are you?"

J. P. pointed out that when it's *convenient*, people will say they don't care about sexual morality or cheating on exams, but they readily become moral abso-

lutists when someone steals their things or violates their rights. The happy ending to the story is that this student saw this inconsistency and was able to make the connection between dignity and human rights and being being made in the image of God. A few weeks later, he committed his life to Christ. I like to tell people that this could be a groundbreaking new evangelistic method churches could use called "stealing stereos for Jesus"!

J. P.'s natural theology has many other practical, everyday outworkings. J. P. is keen on highlighting these for laypersons, not just scholars.

EXISTENTIAL ARGUMENTS FOR GOD'S EXISTENCE

In one debate J. P. had with an atheist, he told the audience: "If you're an atheist, I'll bet you a steak dinner that you've had authority issues with a father figure."[35] When I watched that first debate between J. P. and an atheist, I remember how J. P. raised not only arguments for God using evidence and reason, but he also appealed to the argument from need or longing for God as well—what Clifford Williams calls "existential arguments" for belief in God.[36] In that video, J. P. commented on the well-known psychologizing argument against God used by Karl Marx and Sigmund Freud; that is, human beings fabricate a father figure to get them through life's difficulties; thus religion is utterly weak-minded and pathetic.[37] J. P. pointed out that this Freudian argument commits the genetic fallacy—attributing truth or falsehood to a belief based on its origin. God's nonexistence doesn't at all follow from how a person came to believe in God. The existence of God must be distinguished from how humans come to believe.

Citing Christian psychologist Paul Vitz, J. P. added that we could turn the Freudian argument on its head. If humans have this deep need or longing for the transcendent, for meaning, for significance, then this could actually serve as a pointer to God's existence. Indeed, many leading atheists like Nietzsche, Freud, Sartre, and Russell had negative or nonexistent relationships with their fathers.[38] In his argument, J. P. reminds us that both evidence and need, the rational and the existential, are part of a broader, holistic framework that point us in a God-ward direction. As humans made in the divine image—the recalcitrant *imago Dei*—we can find belief in God both intellectually as well as existentially satisfying.

This is the point that C. S. Lewis argued over a generation ago—now known as "the argument from desire." It would seem strange to experience hunger or thirst if no food or water existed to satisfy those longings. Likewise, it would seem legiti-

mate to consider our deepest inner needs as well—the longing for significance, security, immortality, deliverance from the fear of death. What if our deepest needs actually point to an ultimate source of satisfaction beyond the this-worldly? In the spirit of the philosopher Blaise Pascal (famed proponent of the "wager argument" for belief in God), Clifford Williams lays out the argument this way:

(1) Humans have an indefinite and intense craving for true happiness.
(2) Only faith in God satisfies this craving.
(3) If only faith in God satisfies this craving, then we are justified in having it.
(4) Therefore, we are justified in having faith in God.

While not arguing that the Christian faith is therefore *true*, this "existential" argument asserts that faith in God is *justified* or *legitimate to have* since "it brings about the satisfaction of the indefinite and intense craving mentioned in the first premise."[39] We have been created with certain crucial needs, and it makes sense God alone would be capable of fulfilling them.

FINAL REMARKS

When J. P. presents natural theological arguments in academic journals or monographs, his case for God may appear abstract and detached from the real world. J. P.'s natural theology is no mere armchair discussion. It has a weighty purpose, which can be summarized in the apostle Paul's words: ". . . so that they would seek [God] and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us" (Acts 17:27). As important as God's existence is, this is a preliminary step in something more specific and personal. If a good, personal, powerful, conscious, and intelligent Creator exists, J. P. frequently asks: what has this Being actually *done* to help humans out of their miserable, broken condition? Natural theology can serve as a doorway to Christ—that is, arguments for God's existence create a "plausibility structure," in which embracing Jesus of Nazareth becomes a credible option. A defense of Jesus' superior uniqueness—the one who perfectly reveals God (John 14:6–9)—over against world religion founders such as Muhammad, Buddha, or Lao-Tzu or arguments for the historical, bodily resurrection of Jesus naturally springs from the backdrop of a personal, good, powerful, and intelligent Creator. So, if we have good evidence for a God who creates the universe *ex nihilo*, then we are warranted in believing in the virgin birth or in miracles like the resurrection.

I am one very grateful witness to the remarkable impact of J. P. Moreland on my life, which, thanks to his influence and God's grace, has been extended in my own writings, teaching, and ministry to touch the lives of others. Indeed, this same experience could be recounted by numerous people—indeed many, many thousands, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. We can readily attest to—and give thanks for—the high-quality philosophical work in which J. P. has been engaged for the sake of God's kingdom.

Notes

1. J. P. Moreland, *Scaling the Secular City: A Defense of Christianity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1987).
2. The latter argument J. P. expanded into the article, "Reflections on Meaning in Life without God," *Trinity Journal* 9 (1988): 18–34, which was also formative in my thinking about this topic.
3. J. P. Moreland, *Christianity and the Nature of Science: A Philosophical Investigation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1989).
4. J. P. Moreland and Kai Nielsen, *Does God Exist? The Debate between Theists and Atheists* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus, 1993).
5. For example, J. P. contributed to my coedited books *The Rationality of Theism* (London: Routledge, 2003) and *The Routledge Companion to Philosophy of Religion*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2013). J. P. and I were on a team of coeditors for *The Apologetics Study Bible: A Guide to Defending the Christian Faith* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2007). I also contributed essays to books J. P. has coedited: "A Moral Argument," in *To Every One an Answer: A Case for the Christian Worldview* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004); and "Ethics Needs God," in *Debating Christian Theism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).
6. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, ed. Mary Gregor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 133.
7. William Lane Craig and J. P. Moreland, "Introduction," in *The Blackwell Companion to Natural Theology* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2009), ix.
8. J. P. suggests this in *Does God Exist?* where he speaks of "Atheism and Leaky Buckets: The Christian Rope Pulls Tighter."
9. J. P. Moreland, *The God Question* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2009), 55.
10. Ibid., 56.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. Ninian Smart, "Religion as a Discipline," *Concept and Empathy*, ed. Donald Wiebe (New York: New York University Press, 1986), 161.
14. This particular version is taken from J. P. Moreland, "The Ontological Status of Properties," in *Naturalism: A Critical Analysis*, eds., William Lane Craig and J. P. Moreland (London: Routledge, 2000), 72–79.

15. J. P. discusses the *kalam* argument in *Scaling the Secular City*, chap. 1 and *The God Conversation*, chap. 3.
16. Moreland, *Scaling the Secular City*, 41–42.
17. See Moreland, *Scaling the Secular City*, chap. 2 and Moreland, *The God Conversation*, chap. 4.
18. J. P. Moreland, *The Recalcitrant Imago Dei: Human Nature and the Failure of Naturalism* (London: SCM Press, 2009).
19. See Moreland, *Consciousness and the Existence of God: A Theistic Argument* (London: Routledge, 2008).
20. This list is a combination of items in *Consciousness and the Existence of God*, 38–39; and J. P. Moreland, "Arguments about Human Persons," in *The Routledge Companion to Theism*, eds. Charles Taliaferro, Victoria S. Harrison, and Stewart Goetz (London: Routledge, 2013), 404.
21. See Moreland, *Consciousness and the Existence of God*, 32.
22. See J. P. Moreland and Scott Rae, *Body and Soul: Human Nature and the Crisis in Ethics* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000).
23. See Moreland, *Consciousness and the Existence of God*, chap. 9.
24. J. P. and I have had several discussions on this topic over the years.
25. This panel discussion—"Prospects for Body/Soul Dualism Today"—took place on November 19, 2011, in San Francisco, CA.
26. See N.T. Wright's robust defense of this "duality" in his *The Resurrection of the Son of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003). Wright prefers not to use the term *dualism*.
27. Robert C. Koons and George Bealer, "Introduction," in *The Waning of Materialism*, eds. Robert C. Koons and George Bealer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), xvii–xxi.
28. J. P. Moreland, "An Enduring Self: The Achilles' Heel of Process Philosophy," *Process Studies* 17 (1988): 193.
29. Alvin Plantinga, "Twenty Years' Worth of the SCP," *Faith and Philosophy* 15 (1998): 153.
30. Alvin Plantinga, "Advice to Christian Philosophers," *Faith and Philosophy* 1 (1984): 255.
31. J. P. Moreland and Tim Muehloff, *The God Conversation* (Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2007).
32. Ibid., 146.
33. Ibid., 147.
34. J. P. Moreland, *Love Your God with All Your Mind* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1997), 153–54.
35. "Does the Christian God Exist?" debate between J. P. Moreland and Clancy Martin at Word of Life Church, Saint Joseph, Missouri, December 1, 2005. Audio available at: http://www.brianauten.com/Apologetics/moreland-martin-debate.mp3.
36. Clifford Williams, *Existential Reasons for Belief in God: A Defense of Desires and Emotions for Faith* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2011).
37. See Sigmund Freud, *Future of an Illusion*, ed. J. Strachey (New York: Norton, 1961).

38. Paul C. Vitz's earlier work found its way into the book, *Faith of the Fatherless: The Psychology of Atheism* (Dallas: Spence, 1999). In private conversation, Vitz has mentioned to me that this book will come out in a new edition, which takes up several of the "new atheists"—Richard Dawkins, Daniel Dennett, and Christopher Hitchens.
39. Ibid., 54.

What Place, then, for Rational Apologetics?

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FOR THE PAST THIRTY YEARS and more, J. P. Moreland has tenaciously defended the idea that advancing apologetic arguments on behalf of the truth of Christianity is essential to the health and vitality of the cause of Christ. In countless articles, books, sermons, interviews, lectures, and debates, J. P. has taught and embodied the (perhaps initially) unexpected truth that there is no conflict between faith and reason, between what is known based on the Bible, and what reason tells us after carefully deliberating upon the extrabiblical evidence. Indeed, he has had the audacity to claim that apologetics is actually a "New Testament ministry."[1] Thus, as followers of Jesus, we're *obliged* to engage in it.

J. P.'s strong advocacy in this area has fanned into a flame the wake-up call originally issued to an intellectually slumbering Church by the apologetic giants of the last generation (Francis Schaeffer, Josh McDowell, and others). We are all the better for it. Apologetics organizations, radio shows, conferences, websites, and blogs literally abound. In many ways, things have never been better in the world of apologetics. And yet there is little denying the fact that the predominant outlook and trajectory of the coming generation of evangelicals is decidedly anti-intellectual. Titles with highly relational themes such as *Blue Like Jazz* and *Love Wins* are instantly snapped up by young evangelicals, becoming bestsellers virtually overnight.

We are not prophets (nor even the sons of prophets), but it seems clear to us that the apologetic torch J. P. has carried throughout his ministry—and which he has passed to us—might well be extinguished in a future evangelical subculture that scorns the very notion of rational, truth-based apologetics. No doubt we will be told that such an approach to engaging nonbelievers is intolerant, irrelevant, and non-relational. It advances itself by making objective truth claims, as opposed to participating in "conversations" where the aim is merely to appreciate one another, minimize our differences, and enjoy the process.

In this chapter, we shall attempt to show that J. P.'s understanding of apologetics is beautifully positioned (going forward) to counter resistance to a rationally defensible Christianity—resistance arising from the mistaken idea that any rational defense will fail to support or even undermine *relationship*. We'll look first at the complaint that since rational apologetics doesn't prove the God of Christianity, it falls short of delivering what matters most—a personal agent worthy of worship and relationship. We'll then consider a relatively recent charge that the use of reason and argument in evangelistic contexts is relationally futile. Since people aren't looking for arguments, and logic is an arbitrary human invention, we should present Christianity to others as an irrational faith story.

PURPOSE-DRIVEN APOLOGETICS

According to J. P., there are four reasons we should engage in rational apologetics.[2] *First*, it is a biblical command (Jude 3; 1 Peter 3:15) for which we have pristine examples in the ministries of Jesus and Paul. We should obey the command and follow the examples. Since, in particular, "Paul reasoned with unbelievers and gave evidence for the gospel,"[3] so should we. *Secondly*, apologetics serves to remove impediments to faith "and thus aid[s] unbelievers in embracing the gospel."[4] And of course that is a good thing. *Third*, it strengthens believers by (i) instilling in them the conviction that their faith is true and reasonable, and (ii) fostering spiritual growth by filling out their Christian worldview, thereby enabling them to better see God at work in His two books: the Bible and the book of nature. And then *finally*, apologetics contributes "to health in the culture at large."[5] It promotes the idea that Christianity can be *argued for* with publicly accessible facts. It can't be culturally quarantined as a stream of emotive, cognitively meaningless nonsense.

Now what's truly striking about this fourfold purpose is just how relational it *is*. It speaks of the relation of the believer to himself (his own spiritual life), the

believer to the unbeliever, and the believer to the larger culture. And the role of apologetics in each case (as J. P. sees it) is to help people become rightly related to the Ultimate Person—God Himself. So at first glance this worry about apologetics being anti-relational seems perplexing. If anything, the exact opposite seems to be true. J. P.-style apologetics is fully and completely relational. Wherein, then, lies the problem?

ARE "JUST-ADEQUATE" CAUSES INADEQUATE?

In his book *The Evidence for God*, Paul Moser argues that the principle chore of natural theology is to establish the existence of God understood as a "personal agent who is worthy of worship and is thus morally perfect and hence perfectly loving toward all persons."[6] According to Moser, even if rational apologetics can succeed in establishing that there is a God, it fails to say very much about Him. At best, God is posited as the best explanation for certain visible features of the universe (e.g., fine-tuning). However, all such arguments, says Moser, give us only a cause "just adequate" to yield those features. These "'just-adequate' causes, however, clearly fall short of establishing or confirming the moral character of a personal agent worthy of worship."[7]

Perhaps so; but even if so, it doesn't obviously follow that "just-adequate" apologetics is a dead end in bringing nonbelievers into relational contact with the Christian God. Just consider, for example, Paul's oft-quoted words in Romans:

> For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. (1:18–20 NASB)

What we have here, quite obviously, is a "just-adequate" cause posited to explain a specific feature of the visible world. We might set out the argument as follows:

(1) There is a visible world of things [*The Existence Thesis*].
(2) The visible world and the things in it have the property of being made [*The Property Thesis*].

Thus

(3) There is a being (God) with the invisible attributes (e.g., eternal power

> and a divine nature) necessary for creating the visible world and the things in it [*The Adequate Cause Thesis*].

And what Paul is saying, if we have him right, is that "the truth" suppressed—namely, (3)—is (i) *propositional* rather than personal in nature (it's a truth *about* God), (ii) *powerful* because it takes a concerted effort to hold it down, and (iii) *perspicuous* because it exposes the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. To suppress this (true) proposition, we are told, is to exchange "the truth of God for a lie" (v. 25). Moreover, not only *can* this truth be known, it *is* known—and this for the simple reason that God has "shown it" to everyone. No wonder, then, that the ungodly have to *suppress* (3) by an act of will. It's because we're *not just dealing with truth*; it's a commodity much more powerful than that. It's *knowledge* about God.

There is a vast difference between truth and knowledge. Truth is when you believe something that corresponds with the facts. Knowledge, at least as J. P. sees it, is much more. It involves believing what is true *based on sufficient evidence*.[8] This seems to be Paul's view as well. Notice how very careful he is to distinguish these epistemic commodities. What marks off "the truth" about God (v. 18) from what is "known about God" (v. 19) is that the latter involves God's *showing* or *making evident* "the truth" about Himself. God Himself is the evidence provider. Consequently, the content of (3) is "evident to them" and "clearly seen." This is high definition revelation.

"Seeing" Invisible Attributes

Now the thing to see here is that everyone *knows* that God exists. There are no real atheists, only suppressors. The purpose of "just-adequate" apologetics, therefore, cannot be to move a nonbeliever from a state of ignorance to knowledge. So what *is* its purpose? Note first that the invisible attributes are said to be perceived "through" created things. What does that mean? How shall we understand Paul here?

According to Alvin Plantinga, there is the suggestion (implicitly in Paul, but explicitly in Calvin) that God has designed us in such a way that "there is a sort of instinct, a natural human tendency, a disposition, a nisus to form beliefs about God under a variety of conditions and in a variety of situations."[9] The created world is presented to us, and we perceive it. And then because of how God has engineered us, that circumstance produces in us theistic belief without inference:

> These circumstances, we might say, trigger the disposition to form the beliefs in question; they form the occasion on which those beliefs arise. Under these circumstances, we develop or form theistic beliefs—or, rather, these beliefs are formed in us; in the typical case we don't consciously choose to have those beliefs. Instead, we find ourselves with them.[10]

Now of course, there is a vast difference between *having a belief caused or triggered in us* versus *being shown that a belief is true*. For Plantinga, we are the passive recipients of theistic belief. Our cognitive contribution to the process of acquiring theistic belief is nil. We don't have to grasp anything, reflect on evidence, or exercise any intellectual virtue. Our belief producing mechanisms, if working properly, take care of everything—all without the hint of inference.

But isn't there a problem here? The apostle doesn't say we are *given* the knowledge of God. He says we are *shown* it, but not directly. It is evident *through* something else. This suggests that Plantinga has misread Paul. The cognitive relation between ungodly knower and known divine attribute is not, as Plantinga thinks, the two-termed *understands* relation (*x* understands *y*). No doubt, on J. P.'s ontology, such a relation exists. It's just not what Paul has in mind in Romans 1. There he speaks of God's eternal power and divine nature being *understood through* visible things: a three-termed relation (*x* understands *y* through *z*) which is quite different. And his point is this: God does show us the truth of (3); however, He does this indirectly—by way of (1) and (2). Here, an inference is needed. But it's *our* inference; *we* (and not God) draw the conclusion at (3)—and do that freely. We all do.

Suppressing God

In most areas, if we fail to attend properly to what we know, we'll be mistaken; we might fail a test, or make some incorrect measurements when building a deck. We're mistaken, but we wouldn't say we were guilty of any moral wrongdoing. Not so with our natural knowledge of God. It is obligation conferring. We must *honor* God and *thank* Him, if we at once admit (3): "For even though they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened" (Rom. 1:21 NASB).

At this point in Paul's argument, the nonbeliever only knows there is a "just-adequate" God; he doesn't yet know this is the Christian God. He may never

know that. Nevertheless, he recognizes that he is under obligation to Him; otherwise, what would be the point of suppressing? If God has created everything, He owns everything, in which case we can't do with things (say, our own bodies) what we please. The knowledge of God spoils our efforts at using created things to satisfy *our own* desires on *our own* terms. Thus Thomas Nagel opines

> I want atheism to be true and am made uneasy by the fact that some of the most intelligent and well-informed people I know are religious believers. It isn't just that I don't believe in God and, naturally, hope that I'm right in my belief. It's that I hope there is no God! I don't want there to be a God; I don't want the universe to be like that.[11]

To avoid being dethroned, therefore, the flesh suppresses (3). It strips the world and the things in it (e.g., other persons) of their creation properties and purposes, supplying to them instead (with the help of the world system and its architect) carnal meanings. But there is a price for this kind of suppression: it ends (so we think) in a violation of one or more of our rational obligations.

For example, it is scarcely rational to deny (1): *The Existence Thesis*. For that would be to affirm *Illusionism*—the thesis that the world lacks extra-mental existence. Surely that is rationally impermissible on the available evidence.[12] What about (2): *The Property Thesis*? Can we not deny that the things mentioned in (1) are *made things*? Not reasonably and not if what Paul has in mind are such things as the heavens, the earth, and the like. For quite obviously, these things are not self-existent; they don't exist by a necessity in their own nature.[13] To deny this is ultimately to affirm *Spinozism*: that the material universe (taken as the entire collection of concrete, physical things) is a logically necessary being whose nonexistence is contradictory. That is a *huge* metaphysical pill to swallow, and enormously less rational than its denial.

But if so, then surely we will agree that the universe is *contingent*; and if contingent, then caused by something (i) *eternal*—since whatever caused the universe "must be something outside the natural world itself,"[14] and thus not a contingent thing, but instead self-existent and so eternal; and (ii) *powerful*—because it made the cosmos and everything in it. Again, we can evade this conclusion at a price: all we have to do is affirm *Inexplicability*—that there needn't be a cause, a reason, or an explanation for why a thing that doesn't have to exist *actually does*.[15] As J. P. rightly notes, this seems unthinkable.[16]

The upshot is that those who opt for the likes of *Illusionism*, *Spinozism*, or *Inexpli-*

cability are indeed able to avoid Paul's *Adequate Cause Thesis*, but at a substantial price, thereby suggesting Nagel-like suppression. The job of the Christian apologist is to bring such individuals back from the brink: "My brothers, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back, let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins" (James 5:19–20 ESV). Therein lies the motivation for rational apologetics. Showing the unbeliever the extreme lengths to which he has gone to avoid relating to God on His terms can serve as a wake-up call, helping him to locate the real problem (rebellion) and its only solution (repentance). In short, the "just-adequate" apologetic doesn't fall short of relationship; it *advances* it.

ABSURD APOLOGETICS?

A very different complaint against rational apologetics appears in John Wilkinson's recent "A Defense of Skepticism."[17] Wilkinson proposes a "new take on apologetics," one in which we can "be comfortable in our own irrational skin . . . Illogical . . . Unreasonable . . . Absurd."[18] We must confess, an irrational, illogical faith doesn't make our skin do anything but crawl. But what we fail to understand, says Wilkinson, is that neither faith nor reason claims to be logical; they're both on the "same uncertain ground." Hence there's no need to worry that Christianity is illogical and can't be defended. The same thing is true of reason.

> We seem to forget logic was not discovered in the universe somewhere. It is not The Force. Reason and logic are products of creation, the software our brains use to make sense of things here on this earth. We invented things like science, math and time. . . Our "logic" is just a way of feeling our way through this world. In the end, it is a story just like any other. . . In reality, reason and faith are both rooted in story.[19]

We invented logic, science, math, and time? As philosophers, we're naturally curious how Wilkinson arrived at this spectacular conclusion. Let's start by accentuating the positive. We do think science is the result of human creative activity. Science, after all, is the *study* of the natural world; it involves crafting hypotheses, carrying out experiments, acquiring confirming/disconfirming evidence, and the like. These are things *we* do.[20] But what science studies—namely, the hard and heavy world of planet and stars—we haven't had a hand in creating at all.

Or have we? Consider Wilkinson's claim that we have invented *time*. It's difficult to take this seriously, especially if time is a feature of the external world.

We're quite happy to agree, of course, that we have invented *time pieces* (as Paley says, watches require watchmakers). But time *itself*? "Time is something that comes from us," says Wilkinson, "not from somewhere out there. We created it."[21] We did this when "a long time ago someone attempted to standardize the passage of time and called the smallest unit a 'second'."[22] Since we decided what seconds and minutes are, we are in fact the authors of time. But this is deeply confused. What we did was merely to *call* those periods of time a "second" and a "minute." And we could just as well have called them something else—say, a "parsec" and a "codec"—in which case there would have been 60 parsecs in a codec. But it's obviously a grand mistake to think that we brought about those temporal periods by affixing labels to them.

On the other hand, swimming against the tide, is the German philosopher, Immanuel Kant (d. 1804). He thinks of time as merely a *form* the mind imposes on raw, unstructured sensation; things aren't really *in time* so much as we *represent them to ourselves* as being so. Wilkinson sees the connection between his view and Kant's,[23] but fails to recognize that (by similar reasoning) Kant pays the same compliment to *existence*, *space*, *object*, *property*, *cause*, and *effect*. All of these are just structured ways the mind processes reality. Reality—whatever it is; you can't know on his view—doesn't contain any of these things. Rather, we human beings play the role of God, constructing the world of objects and their properties in space and time. Obviously, no proper Christian can believe this, though we must say it is a tremendous money-saving device. Why spend billions of dollars firing the Hubble Space Telescope "into" space, when space isn't "out there" to begin with? Nothing could be more foolish. (It goes without saying that there aren't many Kantians at NASA.)

DISMANTLING CHRISTIANITY BY INVENTION

No matter how you look at it, this bald assertion about our inventing time is in trouble. Well, what about mathematics and logic? Did we invent those too? Here things go rapidly downhill. For as J. P. observes, this postmodern line of thinking implies that "the basic laws of logic are Western constructions, and in no way are they to be taken as universally valid laws of reality itself."[24] Everything becomes a matter of sheer convention. We see three major problems for this line of thinking.

The Status Problem

Laws of logic and mathematics are paradigms of necessary truths: propositions that are true and could not have been false. Here are a few examples:

(4) 7+5=12;
(5) A is not non-A (*law of noncontradiction*);
(6) If *p* implies *q* and *p* is true, then *q* is true (*modus ponens*).

According to Wilkinson, none of these propositions has the status of a *law*—something that holds universally and as a matter of necessity. In fact, on his view, they all have less status than the law of gravity, which we are quite sure he doesn't think we invented. You can't change *that* law, but the "laws" of logic and mathematics are all subject to revision. Like the rule that says, "Don't lick your knife while eating lunch with the Queen," these "laws" could have been quite different if that's what we had decided. To deny them isn't contradictory; it's simply unconventional.

If this is what Wilkinson is thinking, he has undoubtedly confused *sentences* with the *propositions* they express. Perhaps it's true, as he says, that "we have a numbering system based on 10 'digits' (literally 'fingers') because we have 10 fingers."[25] But all that shows is that the system of characters and symbols we use for expressing mathematical truths is arrived at by convention. It doesn't show that the propositional *truths* expressed by means of those symbols are in any way dependent on us. The proposition expressed by the sentence "7+5=12" was around (and true) long before we human beings happened on the scene.

Why is this important? Well, take (5) on our list—the law of noncontradiction (LNC). And now suppose it's just a convention. Is that really all that bad? Well yes, actually, it is. It means that there is no *real* difference between *p* and not-*p*; both could be true at the same time and in the same way. In other words, to affirm "*p* and not-*p*" merely flouts convention; it's not contradictory, though, because there are no contradictions. Here is an illustration. In 2 Corinthians 10:5, Paul reports:

> We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

Here Paul did the truly impossible. Think about it: on Wilkinson's view, you really can't demolish any argument designed to undercut the knowledge of God.

To do *that* you would need to contradict something about the argument—either one of its premises or its logical form. Even worse, if LNC doesn't hold—and hold necessarily—then there isn't any real difference between a pretension and a non-pretension, an idea that precludes knowledge of God and one that doesn't, a thought that obeys Christ and another that does not.

Wilkinson says that Paul "agreed with skeptics that faith is irrational,"[26] and in Corinth showed us a better way: "I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified" (1 Cor. 2:2 NRSV). But you see, on Wilkinson's view, there can be no difference between knowing Christ and failing to know Christ (!)—hence no difference between being saved or not, between heaven or hell—because there is no real difference between *p* and not-*p*. Ironically, then, it doesn't matter whether we tell reason's story, as he calls it, or faith's story. He prefers the latter. But there can be nothing wrong with telling reason's story instead. Without LNC, it's all the same.

(As an aside: Please don't ask us what "faith's story" *is*. We cannot tell you. What we do know is that while postmodern Christians do their best to avoid putting the definite article "the" in front of "faith," Jude exhorts us to contend—not for faith—but rather "*the* faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints" [Jude 3 NRSV]. That we can tell you about.)

The Scope and Self-Referential Problems

There are two ways to turn off your bedside light. One is to reach over and flick the switch. The other is to have the power company shut down the grid for your entire area. That will certainly take care of your problem, but it will also wreak havoc with everyone else's lighting. In effect, that is what Wilkinson has done. In response to a few attacks on the rationality of theism, he moves immediately to a denial of reason and logic altogether. However, because the scope of his denial of logic is universal, it takes out everything in its path, including Wilkinson's own position.

Notice, first, that if Wilkinson is right, no valid, truth-preserving argument can ever (or has ever) been given. A valid argument is one in which it isn't possible for the premises to be true and the conclusion false. Modus ponens—(6) above—is one of many argument forms (logical laws) that ensure validity. On Wilkinson's view, modus ponens is conventional, not a law of logic (there are none), and therefore not a valid argument form. Hence, we can't use "laws" of

logic to extend our knowledge. No one can—not scientists, mathematicians, historians, psychologists, or theologians. In fact, theology is impossible; we can't deduce things from Scripture (since there are no valid argument forms), nor can we bring our exegetical findings into coherence (since LNC isn't necessary).

But then what are we to make of Wilkinson's own arguments? (Yes, he propounds a few himself.) Here's a list of the more obvious ones:

- Most people don't like arguments; arguments don't bring people to faith; *therefore*, arguing for Christianity is a problem.
- Reason and logic are human creations; *therefore*, reason doesn't encompass the existence of God.
- Paul admits that the gospel is foolishness to the Greeks; *therefore*, Paul believed that faith is irrational.

What we can't figure out is why Wilkinson would include these arguments in his article in the first place. As he says, "People are hungry for something, but not arguments," and he himself is averse to the sort of "ideational Ping-Pong" they engender.[27] It certainly seems as though he is attempting to convince his reader of something, and further that these arguments are his means of doing that.

But why should we be persuaded? Even if the premises of these arguments are true, there are no truth-preserving logical laws that would prevent truth from "leaking out" by the time we reached his conclusion. In other words, Wilkinson's denial of logic undercuts the very argument(s) he uses to deny reason and logic. It's a completely self-refuting position. He can't persuade anyone that he is right, or demonstrate that those who disagree are wrong. All he can do is tell us about his impulses to accept or reject the various claims he makes. But suppose what is in fact the case: we have different impulses. What then? Even if we find ourselves with an impulse to embrace his "premises," why *ought* we to embrace his "conclusions" if we lack the relevant impulse? We can't see that Wilkinson has anything like an adequate answer here. And even if we *had* the impulse to accept his "conclusions," why *should* we obey it? As C. S. Lewis once asked:

> Why ought we to obey instinct? Is there another instinct of a higher order directing us to do so, and a third of a still higher order directing us to obey *it*?—an infinite regress of instincts?[28]

The answer, of course, is that there isn't. The only way to terminate an infinite regress of impulses is with something that isn't an impulse, preference, or attraction—that is, a *reason* that underwrites the fact that we *ought* to believe these conclusions having once believed the premises. And we're afraid nothing less than a law of logic or rational thought will do.

In the end, reason and logic aren't things that should threaten us as Christians. Indeed, they can and must be cultivated.[29] As even the hymn writer Isaac Watts (d. 1748) points out,

> It is the cultivation of our reason by which we are better enabled to distinguish good from evil, as well as truth from falsehood. . . . It is by this means we discover our duty to God and our fellow-creatures; by this arrive at the knowledge of natural religion, and learn to confirm our faith in divine revelation, as well as to understand what is revealed. Our wisdom, prudence, and piety, our present conduct and our future hope, are all influenced by the use of rational powers in the search after truth.[30]

It's probably not a bad idea either to remind ourselves just who it was who first said "'Come now, let us reason together,' says the Lord" (Isa. 1:18). What a tragedy if, in flirting with "the basic principals of this world" (Col. 2:8 NIV 1984), we succumb to the hollow postmodern temptation to so revile reason—"the glory of human nature"[31]—and make the Lord's gracious invitation impossible.

By way of conclusion then: rational apologetics, as J. P. thinks of it, is a *helping* ministry; it is designed to move people toward a relationship with God. If "just-adequate" cause arguments fall short of proving a personal agent worthy of worship, perhaps that needn't trouble us, not if their purpose is actually to expose suppression and draw out the need for personal repentance. What should trouble us however—and deeply so—is the suggestion that we ought to be doing *irrational* apologetics to reach our lost world. For that spells the demise of the faith the Great Apostle boldly proclaimed as "true and reasonable" (Acts 26:25).

Notes

1. J. P. Moreland, *Love Your God with All Your Mind: The Role of Reason in the Life of the Soul*, 2nd ed. (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2012), 20.
2. J. P. Moreland, *Scaling the Secular City: A Defense of Christianity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1987), 11–12.
3. Ibid., 12.

4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Paul Moser, *The Evidence for God: Religious Knowledge Reexamined* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 152, emphasis added.
7. Ibid.
8. J. P. Moreland and William Lane Craig, *Philosophical Foundations for a Christian Worldview* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 74. See also *Love Your God with All Your Mind*, 56, 58.
9. Alvin Plantinga, *Warranted Christian Belief* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 188.
10. Ibid., 190.
11. Thomas Nagel, *The Last Word* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 131.
12. For J. P., a belief *P* is rationally impermissible just in case, in light of the evidence, believing not-*P* or suspending judgment on *P* is more warranted that believing *P*. See *Scaling the Secular City*, 13.
13. Fans of the *kalam* argument will wonder why we haven't appealed to the property of *having had a beginning* in connection with (2). The reason is simple: the things Paul has in mind—the things in which God's "eternal power" has been seen "ever since" the world's creation—are not such that we have observed their beginnings. No human being (not even Adam!) ever did see the sun, moon, or stars come into existence—let alone the entire physical universe. Indeed, as J. P. notes, it wasn't until the late 1920s that we had *any* scientific evidence for a temporally finite universe. See *Scaling the Secular City*, 33.
14. See J. P. Moreland, *The God Question* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2009), 66.
15. This is not the place to present (and rebut) all the escape clauses to *The Property Thesis*, but see Samuel Clarke, *A Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God*, ed. Ezio Vailati (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).
16. Compare J. P.: "If something is contingent, then there has to be some reason or cause as to why it exists as opposed to not existing" (*The God Question*, 65). This principle, he observes, is both "commonsensical" and "obviously true" (ibid., 65, 66).
17. John Wilkinson, "A Defense of Skepticism," *Relevant: The Magazine on Faith, Culture, and Intentional Living*, September 8, 2011. http://www.relevantmagazine.com/god/deeper-walk/features/26699-a-defense-of-skepticism.
18. Ibid.
19. Ibid. See also John Wilkinson, *No Argument for God* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2011), 36–39.
20. For further details, see J. P.'s eclectic model of scientific theory formation, experimentation, and testing in *Christianity and the Nature of Science: A Philosophical Investigation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1989), chap. 2.
21. Wilkinson, *No Argument for God*, 38.
22. Ibid.
23. Ibid.

24. Moreland and Craig, *Philosophical Foundations*, 145.
25. Wilkinson, "A Defense of Skepticism."
26. Ibid.
27. Wilkinson, *No Argument for God*, 42.
28. C. S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man* (London: Macmillan, 1944), 48.
29. See J. P.'s important suggestions on this score in the section "How to Develop a Mature Christian Mind" in *Love Your God with All Your Mind*, chaps. 4–5.
30. Isaac Watts, *Logic: The Right Use of Reason in the Inquiry after Truth* (Morgan, PA: Soli Deo Gloria, 1996), 2.
31. Ibid., 1.

Science, Theology, and Intelligent Design: Interdisciplinary Epistemic Virtues

MICHAEL KEAS

"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy."
WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, *HAMLET*, ACT I, SCENE 5

SPECIALISTS IN SPECIFIC DISCIPLINES should periodically rethink the relationship between their field and the accumulated knowledge of humankind. J. P. Moreland's scholarship offers an exemplar of such interdisciplinary work. He has contributed substantially to the integration of four key disciplines: philosophy, theology, science, and history. His work has had profound implications for Christian apologetics and the articulation of a Christian worldview across the academic landscape. We shall focus on J. P.'s contribution to the philosophy of science and its relation to theology. We will also consider J. P.'s affirmation of the intelligent design research program. Building on J. P.'s work, I shall outline how greater attention to the epistemic virtues can guide future cross-disciplinary scholarship. Epistemic virtues are the traits of a theory that indicate it is true or likely true. Such epistemic virtues as elegance and empirical accuracy, although largely self-evident, have been clarified progressively, especially through inquiry in the history and philosophy of science.

FROM CHEMISTRY TO PHILOSOPHY

In his early experience as an undergraduate at the University of Missouri, J. P. Moreland cared more about chemistry than God. He recently recalled his life's turning point, which occurred two years before he earned a BS in chemistry with honors.

> I had very little interest in Christianity and I met some fellows with a campus ministry that talked about Jesus Christ as though He'd actually risen from the dead. So I began to look into Christianity at an intellectual level, because I wanted to know if it was true. I became convinced that it was highly likely that it was true and on that basis gave my life to Christ in 1968.[1]

During the next few decades J. P. devoted himself to the pursuit of theology, philosophy, apologetics, and Christian ministry. In the late 1980s he returned to the study of science, but this time as a philosopher investigating the nature of science itself. His book *Christianity and the Nature of Science: A Philosophical Investigation* (1989), fell into my hands soon after it was published. I wrote J. P. in 1990 telling him about a group of graduate students, including myself, who had studied his 1989 book enthusiastically. He was delighted to learn about our study group, which we called the "Outer Ring." We derived the name from C. S. Lewis's abhorrence of the Inner Ring of academia, which demands obedience to naturalism and political correctness in order to be accepted as one of the "Important People."[2] J. P. was one of our mentors in the scientific and philosophical space outside the oppressive self-perpetuating reward system of naturalism.

The conversation about science and religion has grown considerably in the last few decades, but J. P. outlined with clarity many of the important issues in 1989. Referring to the exploration of the "interaction among science, philosophy and theology," he wrote:

> The Christian community can only benefit from such an exchange. Our community is mature enough to embrace wide differences of opinion in these areas. *But we greatly need more work on science and theology that is sensitive to both the history and philosophy of science*. If this book stimulates such work, I will consider it successful.[3]

J. P., it was a success! It certainly inspired me to become a part of this research program. Note, again, the four disciplines central to the task: philosophy, theology, science, and history. These are the four most important disciplines for

worldview formation today, and the ones that were foundational in starting Biola University's MA Program in Science and Religion, which J. P. encouraged and endorsed.[4] The present essay reissues and refines J. P.'s interdisciplinary call to action.

INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDY OF SCIENCE AND THEOLOGY

J. P. called for investigation into how "science and theology *have* interacted with each other and *should*."[5] How science and theology *have* related can be tracked through historical scholarship and by remaining attentive to recent developments.[6] "How science and theology should interact is primarily a *philosophical* question (though science and theology are involved)," J. P. declared.[7]

The most significant progress in the "science and religion" dialogue since J. P.'s 1989 book has benefitted from the coupling of the history and philosophy of science to recent work in science, theology, and philosophy. Alvin Plantinga's *Where the Conflict Really Lies* (2011) hit a home run with his mature argument against naturalism as a quasi-religion that is in deep conflict with the rational foundations of science.[8] William Dembski and Stephen Meyer are especially noteworthy for developing a robust argument for intelligent design by applying information theory to biology.[9] Old Testament scholar C. John Collins has made the most progress in clarifying the meaning of the biblical passages relevant to the integrative task.[10] Elsewhere, I have surveyed the pivotal contributions of historians of science to grasping Christianity's relationship to science.[11] Once you get the whole story, science and Christianity are in harmony.

Why is it so important now for Christians to understand science in relation to theology? "Undoubtedly the most important influence shaping the modern world is science," J. P. observed in *Christianity and the Nature of Science*.[12] His 2003 revision of this 1989 passage continued in the following way:

> People who lived during the American Civil War had more in common with Abraham than with us. From space travel and nuclear power, anesthesia and organ transplants, to DNA research and lasers, ours is a world of modern science. If Christians are going to speak to the modern world and interact with it responsibly, they must interact with science. And if believers are going to explore God's world by means of science and integrate their theological beliefs with the results of that exploration, they need a deeper understanding of science itself.[13]

The urgency of J. P.'s 1989 (and 2003) call for Christians to study science and theology is underscored by the most recent voice added to the new atheist choir: the eminent physicist Stephen Hawking. J. P. blogged on Hawking's philosophically flawed book *The Grand Design*[14] (coauthored with Leonard Mlodinow) soon after it appeared in 2010. He observed that Hawking and Mlodinow "claim that the laws of nature are consistent with the universe popping into existence from nothing, and in fact, they affirm that this is exactly what happened."[15] J. P. doubts that Hawking thinks "the laws of nature themselves created the universe" because such a claim would be a "simple category fallacy." How so? "Because the laws of nature are formal causes that direct the 'flow' of causation, but they are not efficient causes that produce anything whatsoever," J. P. argues (echoing C. S. Lewis).[16] "However," he continues, "their actual claim is just as egregious, and that for two reasons."

> First, the laws of nature do not apply unless there already is a universe. Those laws govern transitions of states of entities that exist ontologically prior to the laws themselves. Thus, an appeal to the laws of nature to explain how the universe could come from nothing is otiose; those laws presuppose a universe for their applicability and cannot in any sense be employed to explain what they presuppose. And coming-into-existence is not a process that could be governed by laws; it is, rather, an instantaneous occurrence.[17]

This shows how J. P. is skilled at recognizing philosophical arguments made by scientists who do not understand how to do philosophy well. His second reason for being unimpressed by Hawking's *Grand Design* provides similar insight.

> Second, the principle "something cannot come from nothing without a cause" is a metaphysically necessary philosophical principle that is known *a priori* from an analysis of "nothing" which, as it turns out, is the complete absence of anything whatever, including properties, relations, causal powers, and so forth. Thus, "nothing" is not some sort of shadowy thing that could serve as a material or efficient cause. Note carefully, that this principle is not a scientific one; it is not an empirical generalization, but a necessary truth of philosophy.[18]

Stephen Hawking would benefit from reading a little Moreland. Hawking is a leading physicist, but a reckless philosopher. "Philosophy is dead," he announced in his *Grand Design*, because it "has not kept up with modern developments in

science, particularly physics."[19] This very statement is philosophical, not scientific, and thus self-defeating, much like saying "I can't speak a word of English." We should be grateful that Hawking has discovered wonderful things about nature despite a rationality-defying nontheistic faith that has prompted him to declare philosophy "dead." Could such a naturalistic faith eventually undermine the foundations of science[20] to which the Judeo-Christian tradition contributed so much?[21]

J. P. expressed similar concerns about Hawking's *Grand Design* in his blog's conclusion.

> In previous times when average people knew more philosophy, these claims would simply be laughable because they are philosophical assertions being made by scientists who have little or no philosophical training. . . . But we live in a scientistic culture. When a scientist speaks, he is taken to be an authority irrespective of what the topic is. . . . I have long believed that philosophical naturalism, with its unjustified scientism, has helped to create an intellectually unsophisticated culture, and this is one reason why I think this way.[22]

We should review J. P.'s treatment of scientism in order to appreciate the depth from which this conclusion emerges. Scientism is the view that science is the only way to acquire knowledge of reality. This very statement is a philosophical assertion *about* science, not an assertion *of* science, and by its own lights, could not be knowledge. Scientism is therefore self-refuting.[23] Beliefs formed outside the natural sciences are merely subjective opinions, so many scientism advocates like Hawking claim. J. P.'s critique of scientism includes an argument against an airtight definition of science.[24] He demonstrates the failure of attempts to specify a set of necessary and sufficient conditions for an activity to count as science.[25] This failure to demarcate science from neighboring disciplines undermines scientism because advocates of scientism often assume that science has no overlap with other disciplines. Recognition of such disciplinary overlap helps to even the playing field for multiple academic domains as partners in knowledge production.

EPISTEMIC VIRTUES: A RATIONAL BASIS FOR INFERRING THE BEST EXPLANATION

Hawking's scientistic dismissal of other fields such as theology and history is problematic on more fundamental epistemological grounds. I shall develop my own

thoughts here and acknowledge where J. P. and others have contributed.

The best theological and historical theories usually exhibit the same epistemic (theoretical) virtues as the most reputable scientific theories. In Christian theology, the Bible is the primary source of data to be explained by theological theories. This reliance on the Bible is supported by historical arguments for the Bible's reliability, coupled with philosophical arguments for God's existence (sometimes with premises supported by scientific evidence, as in the case of the *kalām* cosmological argument for God).[26] In science, history, and theology, a good theory typically possesses at least the following epistemic virtues.

1. Empirical accuracy: It makes good sense of the relevant evidence.
2. Scope: Its empirical accuracy is exhibited in many classes of evidence.
3. Causal adequacy: Its causal account is known to produce the kind of effect in need of explanation.[27]
4. Internal coherence: It is consistent within itself.
5. Conceptual clarity: It is plausible and lacks conceptual problems.[28]
6. Elegance: Its components are bound together beautifully.
7. Predictive power: It has anticipated observations successfully.[29]
8. Fruitfulness: It has generated additional discoveries.
9. Simplicity: The entities it invokes are few in number and not excessively complicated. It also does not have a track record of being modified frequently in ways that seem designed merely to save it from defeat in the face of conflict with new evidence.[30]
10. Universal coherence: It is consistent with warranted beliefs acquired by direct experience, and it is consistent with reasonable inferential beliefs across the academic disciplines.[31]
11. Applicability: It helps us interact with reality successfully (e.g., scientific technology and spiritual formation practices).[32]

The epistemic virtues are best grounded in biblical theism. Our strong intuition of their truth-detecting function makes sense if God created a world, and our minds, consistent with His own beauty, clarity, logic, and meaningfulness. God could have made many different worlds consistent with His own attributes, so we cannot deduce in a simplistic manner the world we inhabit. With due consideration for the disturbing consequences of our rebellion against God, humans, as God's image bearers, are justified in accepting the epistemic virtues as symp-

toms of true (or approximately true) theories in any field of study.[33] *Moral* virtues such as honesty and diligence are also important in academia, but virtues of the *epistemic* sort are equally rooted in God. Naturalism fails to ground either moral or epistemic virtues.[34]

Although the identification, characterization, and ranking of the epistemic virtues are debated by philosophers[35] and by participants in specific theoretical disputes, most scholars agree that these virtues help us to infer which rival theory is the best explanation.[36] The first six items listed belong to the core *explanatory* epistemic virtues, while the seventh is the *predictive* virtue, which is often contrasted with explanatory power.[37] Better accounts of relationships among the epistemic virtues would be helpful, including how the puzzling nature of simplicity relates to the other epistemic virtues. Meanwhile, historical and philosophical studies of widely accepted theories, especially in the natural sciences,[38] have helped us to recognize, refine, and more skillfully apply these rational tools in all theory-making enterprises across the disciplines.

Sometimes, due to the nature of the objects or events being studied, certain epistemic virtues take precedence over others. In the case of theories that reconstruct unrepeatable past sequences of events (human history and natural history), explanatory power typically carries more weight than predictive success.[39] There is no such thing as "the scientific method" to which all scientists adhere, or "the historical method" that all historians employ. Rather, there are many overlapping families of methods within various academic disciplines and subdisciplines.[40] The strength of a theory does not depend upon how most scholars categorize its subject matter (e.g., as "theology" or as "science"), but rather upon how well it displays epistemic virtues. Although there are variations in the prioritization of epistemic virtues that depend upon the nature of the things being studied, such contextual specifications do not undercut the cross-disciplinary normative authority of the epistemic virtues.[41] This insight deserves a more prominent role in all academic endeavors. Some practitioners of cross-disciplinary Christian apologetics already have contributed to this task.[42]

Consider how the epistemic virtues help us assess the most important claim of Christianity, the resurrection of Jesus. The historical theory that "God raised Jesus from the dead" can be compared with rival naturalistic historical theories of what happened after Jesus' crucifixion. The *best* theory will most fully exhibit the epistemic virtues. J. P. and other scholars have engaged in such comparative

explanatory analysis, showing that it is much more reasonable to believe, than not believe, in Jesus' bodily resurrection.[43] This conclusion is not reached by special pleading, but through "normal historical investigation."[44] No other religion beyond Christianity is as successfully accountable to the epistemic virtues. But this remarkable epistemic situation does not negate the essential element of a person responding in faith to the drawing influence of the Holy Spirit. Beyond that, the epistemic virtues *themselves* can be properly grounded *only* in God Himself. Reason is at home in Christianity, but rationalism is not.

INTELLIGENT DESIGN EXHIBITS THE EPISTEMIC VIRTUES BETTER THAN ITS RIVALS

Scientists, like historians who study first-century Palestine, use the same epistemic virtues to evaluate theories that reconstruct past events such as the origin of life. As recently as 2008, J. P. argued that intelligent design (ID) theory has reliable epistemic foundations that are on par with other prominent scientific theories. He found neo-Darwinism in a weaker condition.[45]

What has become of the conversation about ID and neo-Darwinism in recent years? In his 2012 Evangelical Philosophical Society welcoming speech, J. P. urged fellow philosophers to be open-minded about intelligent design. "While I'm an ID advocate," J. P. said, ID skeptics ought to avoid "jumping on the bandwagon" of ID dismissal and give it a careful look.[46]

Even prominent atheist philosopher Thomas Nagel had announced (two months before J. P.'s EPS speech) in his book *Mind and Cosmos* that "the materialist neo-Darwinian conception of nature is almost certainly false."[47] While not an ID advocate like Moreland, Nagel argues that ID theorists "do not deserve the scorn with which they are commonly met."[48] He even grants the respectability of Michael Behe's and Stephen Meyer's "empirical arguments . . . against the likelihood that the origin of life and its evolutionary history can be fully explained by physics and chemistry." Nagel recognizes that ID research displays the epistemic virtues of *empirical accuracy* and *scop*e (and more). The "problems that these iconoclasts pose for the orthodox scientific consensus should be taken seriously," he concludes.[49]

There is much more to ID than a critique of neo-Darwinism. The positive case for ID displays a rich array of epistemic virtues. Scientific integrity and responsible worldview formation calls for a serious look at ID. J. P.'s support of ID is

rooted in the work we shall now summarize.

ID proposes that certain features of the universe and living things are best explained by an intelligent cause rather than an undirected process such as natural selection. ID theorists argue that design can be inferred by studying the informational properties of natural objects to determine if they bear the type of information that, in our experience, arises from intelligence.

ID does not claim that science can identify whether the intelligent agency detected through investigation is the biblical God. Although individual ID-advocating scientists may integrate the scientific discoveries of ID into a larger philosophical-historical-theological argument for the biblical God,[50] this does not negate the scientific status of the design inference from cosmic fine-tuning and biological information. The charge that ID is "just religion" is a rhetorical strategy on the part of critics who wish to dismiss ID without addressing the merits of its empirical arguments. Often this dismissal is couched in terms of methodological naturalism (MN).

MN is the *philosophical* assertion *about* science that only unintelligent natural causes should be used in scientific explanation. Richard Dawkins suggested in an interview with Ben Stein for the documentary *Expelled* that an exception to this methodological rule is permissible in origin of life studies, but only if unintelligently evolved alien intelligent life is the designing intelligence. Stein replied: "So Professor Dawkins was not against intelligent design, just certain types of designers, such as God."[51] Dawkins's procedure seems more arbitrary than methodologically virtuous.

MN as employed by Dawkins arbitrarily limits origins science because it restricts the possible answers before investigation begins. There is a better way. Discovery Institute frequently updates an annotated list of peer-reviewed scientific publications that infer ID as the best explanation of certain natural phenomena.[52] As this list exceeded fifty publications in 2012, the *fruitfulness* (an epistemic virtue) of the ID research program has been established to the degree that we may bank on its future promise. Most of this research would have been left undone if its authors had obeyed MN.

What exactly is the design inference? Scientists can compare objects, such as telescopes, designed by human intelligence, to phenomena whose origin is debatable. When "an intelligent agent acts, it chooses from a range of competing possibilities" to create a complex and specified outcome.[53] Human artifacts such

as my laptop, and the present essay, exhibit complex specified information (CSI). Intelligent design is detected when one observes a highly unlikely event or object (making it complex) that conforms to an independent functional pattern (making it specified). The digital code in DNA and the text of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* both constitute CSI in that they are complex and conform to the functional requirements of either biological life (i.e., proteins made using DNA's code) or English language rules. Intelligent agency[54] is the only explanation of CSI that is *causally adequate* (an epistemic virtue). Indeed, the ID research program exhibits remarkable *simplicity* and *elegance* (more virtues). Specified complexity implicates design. That is the strikingly beautiful and scientifically detectable essence of ID.

CONCLUSION

A theory's strength does not depend on how most experts categorize its subject matter, but rather on how well it embodies epistemic virtues such as empirical accuracy, scope, causal adequacy, internal coherence, conceptual clarity, elegance, predictive power, fruitfulness, simplicity, universal coherence, and applicability. When a person combines the scientific theory of ID as the best (most epistemically virtuous) explanation of complex specified information, with biblical religion as the best explanation of other components of reality (such as widespread first-century evidence-based belief in Jesus' resurrection), a powerful cumulative case for the God who raised Jesus emerges. J. P.'s lifetime of scholarship models well many aspects of this holistic academic endeavor. Let's take this project to the next level.

The call to cross-disciplinary scholarship outlined here emphasizes the epistemic virtues that help make discovery possible. Biblical religion teaches that God made the world, and He made humans in His image with mental capabilities like His. On this view we should expect the largely *a priori* grasp of the epistemic virtues that we experience (duly expanded and clarified by reflecting philosophically on widely acknowledged discoveries, especially in the natural sciences). While naturalism fails to properly ground the epistemic virtues, biblical theism underwrites them and thereby establishes a truth-oriented mind-world connection: We were designed to discover and the world was designed for discovery.[55]

In honor of J. P. Moreland's contribution to "loving God with your mind," churches and private schools ought to use Discovery Institute's free e-booklet *The*

Parent's Guide to Intelligent Design.[56] This guide and the resources it annotates further justify my claim that ID exhibits the epistemic virtues better than any rival theory. *The Parent's Guide* also summarizes how there is more for scientists to explain than just matter, energy, and space-time. Complex specified information exists in DNA, and elsewhere, and it reliably triggers the design inference. Indeed, "there are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy."[57] Hamlet, J. P., and I welcome you to the science of the information age.

Notes

1. See www.apologetics315.com/2013/02/jp-moreland-interview-transcript.html.
2. See www.lewissociety.org/innerring.php.
3. J. P. Moreland, *Christianity and the Nature of Science: A Philosophical Investigation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1989), 14–15, emphasis is mine.
4. During 2005–2008, as a full-time professor of the history and philosophy of science at Biola, I attended philosophy lectures by J. P. Moreland, Tom Crisp, Doug Geivett, and Garry DeWeese in order to craft a course in metaphysics and epistemology for Biola's new MA Program in Science and Religion. I continue to teach adjunctively in this web-based program: www.biola.edu/scienceandreligion. Teaching at the College at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary also allows me to integrate science, philosophy, theology, and history.
5. Moreland, *Christianity and the Nature of Science*, 13, emphasis is mine.
6. Stay informed about science and religion at www.evolutionnews.org and www.faithandevolution.org. College students also should get involved in campus clubs like http://ratiochristi.org and www.ideacenter.org.
7. Moreland, *Christianity and the Nature of Science*, 13.
8. Alvin Plantinga, *Where the Conflict Really Lies: Science, Religion, and Naturalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).
9. William A. Dembski and Jonathan Wells, *The Design of Life: Discovering Signs of Intelligence in Biological Systems* (Richardson, TX: Foundation for Thought and Ethics, 2007); Stephen C. Meyer, *Signature in the Cell: DNA and the Evidence for Intelligent Design* (New York: HarperOne, 2009).
10. C. John Collins, *Genesis 1–4: A Linguistic, Literary, and Theological Commentary* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 2006).
11. See my forthcoming essay about Christianity and the rise of modern science in *Salvo Magazine* (September, 2013).
12. Moreland, *Christianity and the Nature of Science*, 11.
13. J. P. Moreland and William Lane Craig, *Philosophical Foundations for a Christian Worldview* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 307.

14. Stephen W. Hawking and Leonard Mlodinow, *The Grand Design* (New York: Bantam Books, 2010).
15. See www.jpmoreland.com/2010/09/22/scientism-makes-scientists-laughable.
16. C. S. Lewis, *Miracles: A Preliminary Study* (San Francisco: Harper, 2001), 93–94.
17. See www.jpmoreland.com/2010/09/22/scientism-makes-scientists-laughable.
18. Ibid.
19. Hawking and Mlodinow, *The Grand Design*, 5.
20. Moreland and Craig, *Philosophical Foundations*, 348.
21. See my essay about Christianity and the rise of modern science in *Salvo Magazine* (September, 2013).
22. See www.jpmoreland.com/2010/09/22/scientism-makes-scientists-laughable.
23. Moreland and Craig, *Philosophical Foundations*, 348–49. J. P. also critiques weak scientism, which is the view that scientific knowledge is vastly superior to other kinds of knowledge.
24. Moreland, *Christianity and the Nature of Science*, 17–58.
25. See the essays by Moreland and Stephen Meyer at www.asa3.org/ASA/PSCF/1994/PSCF3–94dyn.html.
26. William Lane Craig, *Reasonable Faith: Christian Truth and Apologetics* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2008), 96–156.
27. By "causal adequacy" I mean an adequate account of "how or why" something is the case in the broad sense that includes Aristotle's four causes: material, efficient, formal (informational), and final (teleological). Using terms more common today, this virtue entails adequate "reasons for" and/or "causes of" various states of affairs. For example, what we know about literary and grammatical structures can help ground the adequacy of a theological theory about the authorial intent of a particular biblical text. Here are two valuable accounts of causal adequacy in the social sciences: Andreas Buss, "The Concept of Adequate Causation and Max Weber's Comparative Sociology of Religion," *British Journal of Sociology* 50 (1999): 317–29; T. S. Eberle, "The Phenomenological Life-World Analysis and the Methodology of the Social Sciences," *Human Studies* 33 (2010): 123–39.
28. J. P. distinguishes between internal and external conceptual problems. I include the lack of unresolved *external* conceptual problems within "universal coherence." See Moreland and Craig, *Philosophical Foundations*, 322, 328.
29. Predictive power is not characteristic of many reputable scientific theories, and so its rarity in theological and historical theories is no reason for epistemic alarm. However, archeological confirmation of historical details in the Bible is a general class of prediction (or retrodiction) within biblical theology that has had an excellent track record of success. For a postmodern relativist perspective on varying epistemic virtues in science, history, and theology, see O. Harman and P. L. Galison, "Epistemic Virtues and Leibnizian Dreams: On the Shifting Boundaries between Science, Humanities, and Faith," *European Legacy: Toward New Paradgims* 13 (2008): 551–75. Even though there are good reasons to reject the relativist viewpoints of Harman and Galison, these authors provide perceptive observations about the varying applicability of certain epistemic virtues across the theoretical landscape.

30. The referent of the second sentence in this description of simplicity, also known negatively as the lack of *ad hoc* hypotheses, is more universally truth-indicative than the first component. For example, because of the unusual character of economic activity, successful theories in economics are more complicated (in terms of numbers of entities invoked) than the best theories in physics. However, within the range of complexity appropriate for the discipline of economics, relatively simple theories are more likely true than relatively complex ones. See Richard Swinburne, *Simplicity as Evidence of Truth* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1997), 63. Many aspects of simplicity have to do with the epistemic virtue of elegance.
31. I avoided the term "worldview coherence" because many who engage in worldview analysis have not yet adopted the wise advice of J. P. to refrain from likening a worldview to a pair of glasses that is positioned *between* a person and the world—a metaphor with postmodern relativist implications. See J. P. Moreland, *Kingdom Triangle: Recover the Christian Mind, Renovate the Soul, Restore the Spirit's Power* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007), 32–34.
32. Scientific theories of "how things originate" lead to fewer technological applications than scientific theories of "how things work." A more correct theology supports spiritual formation practices that more effectively change the structure of our souls into the image of Christ.
33. Some of these perspectives are developed in Plantinga, *Where the Conflict Really Lies*, 265–303. See also Moreland and Craig, *Philosophical Foundations*, 322–23.
34. William Lane Craig and J. P. Moreland, eds., *Naturalism: A Critical Analysis* (New York: Routledge, 2000). Also see Plantinga, *Where the Conflict Really Lies*, 309–50; and my forthcoming journal article, "Virtue Formation in Science and Religion: How Moral and Epistemic Virtues Interact" (2014).
35. Hugh Lacey, *Is Science Value Free? Values and Scientific Understanding* (London: Routledge, 1999), 52–53. Also read Ernan McMullin's 1982 presidential address to the Philosophy of Science Association, reprinted as Ernan McMullin, "Values in Science," *Zygon: Journal of Religion & Science* 47 (2012): 697–99.
36. Peter Lipton, *Inference to the Best Explanation*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2004), 122–23.
37. Swinburne argues that prediction is no better than explanatory power for implicating a theory's truth because the theory-observation epistemic relation is *logical*, and thus immune to the *timing* of observations relative to the formulation of a theory. Richard Swinburne, *Is There a God?* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 30–31.
38. G. Doppelt, "Reconstructing Scientific Realism to Rebut the Pessimistic Meta-Induction," *Philosophy of Science* 74 (2007): 96–118. Doppelt articulates an inference-to-the-best-explanation realism in which increasingly sophisticated standards of epistemic virtue help make sense of scientific progress.
39. Harman and Galison, "Epistemic Virtues and Leibnizian Dreams," 563. Galison writes: "The defining epistemic and methodological virtues of science have . . . changed over time. Here's another common attempt to define a transcendental virtue: science should be predictive. Well, yes and no. Darwin could make certain kinds of predictions, but by and large evolutionary biology is far more explanatory than predictive. . . . I suppose one could conclude that evolutionary biology was consequently not science—but more sensibly we discard the simplistic criterion of prediction as the defining criterion of scientificity." He then also notes that string theory, like Darwinism, is not accurately predictive, but

has widely recognized explanatory success nonetheless. See also Meyer, *Signature in the Cell*, 148–72 and Carol E. Cleland, "Prediction and Explanation in Historical Natural Science," *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science* 62 (2011): 551–82.

40. Moreland and Craig, *Philosophical Foundations*, 307–24.
41. Perhaps this insight could be developed by combining the perspectives of particularlism and methodism in relation to the "problem of the criterion." See ibid., 98–102. See also Ted Poston, "Explanationist Plasticity and the Problem of the Criterion," *Philosophical Papers* 40 (2011): 395–419.
42. Besides the works of Moreland, W. L. Craig, and Gary Habermas, see also Swinburne, *Is There a God?*, 19–34.
43. Craig, *Reasonable Faith*, 359–99. Craig argues for Jesus' resurrection as an inference to the best explanation as judged by the epistemic virtues.
44. J. P. Moreland, *Scaling the Secular City: A Defense of Christianity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1987), 160.
45. J. P. Moreland, "Intelligent Design and the Nature of Science," in *Intelligent Design 101: Leading Experts Explain the Key Issues*, ed. H. Wayne House (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2008), 56–62.
46. November 14, 2012, EPS welcoming speech, starting at 11:48 min.: www.youtube.com/watch?v=OmbwkZ804sI.
47. Moreland comments on Nagel at www.jpmoreland.com/articles/philosophical-note-on-nagels-mind-and-cosmos.
48. Thomas Nagel, *Mind and Cosmos: Why the Materialist Neo-Darwinian Conception of Nature Is Almost Certainly False* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 10.
49. Ibid. Nagel cites approvingly Meyer's *Signature in the Cell* (2009) and Behe's two books: Michael J. Behe, *Darwin's Black Box: The Biochemical Challenge to Evolution*, 2nd ed. (New York: Free Press, 2006); Michael J. Behe, *The Edge of Evolution: The Search for the Limits of Darwinism* (New York: Free Press, 2007).
50. For a sparkling example, see Stephen Meyer's lectures in the first two DVD sets of www.trueU.org.
51. *Expelled: No Intelligence Allowed* (Premise Media, 2008). Stein interviews Dawkins near the film's end.
52. See www.discovery.org/a/2640.
53. William A. Dembski, *The Design Inference: Eliminating Chance through Small Probabilities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 62.
54. Although J. P. offers a theistic libertarian model of intelligent agency, one need not accept this model to participate in the ID research program. See J. P. Moreland, "The Explanatory Relevance of Libertarian Agency as a Model of Theistic Design," in *Mere Creation: Science, Faith & Intelligent Design*, ed. William A. Dembski (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1998), 265–88.
55. Scientific and philosophical work that helps justify this claim includes Alvin Plantinga, *Warrant and Proper Function* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); Guillermo Gonzalez and Jay Richards, *The Privileged Planet: How Our Place in the Cosmos Is Designed for Discovery* (Washington, DC: Regnery, 2004); Benjamin Wiker and Jonathan Witt,

A Meaningful World: How the Arts and Sciences Reveal the Genius of Nature (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006).

56. See www.discovery.org/csc/back-to-school.
57. William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, Act I, Scene 5.

Credits

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"Not Willing That Any Should Perish": An Apologetic *for* Pro-Life Activism

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I AM HONORED TO BE contributing to this volume of essays honoring my close friend and long-time colleague, J. P. Moreland. He has had a deep interest in connecting his academic specialties of metaphysics and philosophy of mind to issues in bioethics. We wrote together making this connection explicit in our 2000 book, *Body and Soul: Human Nature and the Crisis in Ethics*,[1] where he laid the metaphysical framework and I provided the "shoe leather" as it related to bioethics. We applied a substance view of a human person to abortion, embryo research, reproductive and genetic technologies, and physician assisted suicide. Throughout our work on that book, he was insistent that it not be simply a philosophical treatise divorced from application to the real life issues that are profoundly affected by our views on metaphysics and philosophy of mind. He was concerned to make a contribution to both the broad framework in which to view the human person, but also cared deeply about how it worked out at the bedside and other places where decisions about life and death were being made. Though he has not himself done serious work in bioethics for some time, he has relied on others to take his framework for understanding the human person and make the necessary application to the various arenas of bioethics. But his passion to see his work affect these pressing moral and personal issues has not wavered over the

years. I count it a privilege to have been and continue to be his co-laborer in this important intersection of philosophy and bioethics. In this paper, I want to connect the bioethical issues and make a case for a broad pro-life view.

This year (2013) marks the 40th anniversary of the *Roe v. Wade* decision that legalized abortion and had a profound impact on bioethics in general and the view of the human person in particular. In the forty years since the *Roe v. Wade* decision was handed down, the world of bioethics has undergone enormous changes. Since 1973, medical technology has opened up new vistas unimagined at that time and created new ethical dilemmas both for physicians at the bedside and legislators making public policy. But the decision also profoundly changed how the human person was viewed in the culture, and reflects an erosion of respect for the dignity and sanctity of life.

When the *Roe* decision was delivered and law protected abortion on demand, few people imagined the impact that the Court's decision would have on other aspects of bioethics. In fact, only a handful of pro-life advocates were bold enough to predict that it would radically alter the way in which society viewed prenatal life. Some even predicted that the decision would come back to affect the way society views euthanasia, a claim widely dismissed at the time as extreme pro-life rhetoric. Yet, forty years later, those who predicted such things are able to say, "I told you so." The *Roe* decision profoundly changed the landscape of bioethics in the United States. Its impact is still felt today and the background of legal abortion has changed the way society thinks about the moral status of the human person. It is clear that the change in the law left an indelible pedagogical impression on society and the way we think about ethics at the edges of life. I will suggest that all of the major areas of bioethics were affected: partial-birth abortions, genetic testing, in vitro fertilization, embryo and stem cell research, and physician assisted suicide. These all reflect a view of the human person that leaves the unborn and the elderly vulnerable to having their right to life compromised.

ABORTION AND INFANTICIDE

The conventional wisdom in the popular culture today is that the *Roe* decision legalized abortion up to the point of viability, which in 1973 was roughly at the end of the second trimester. In fact, if you ask most people on the street today at what point abortion is legal most will reply that it is up to the point of viability. *Roe* originally and arbitrarily divided up pregnancy into three trimesters and

ruled that the state had a different interest in each one. In the first trimester, the right to abortion was virtually unlimited. Women could procure abortions for any reason and at any time. In the second trimester, when performing abortions became a bit more complicated, a woman's right to choose abortion could be limited in order to protect her safety. For example, the state could mandate that only licensed physicians at licensed medical facilities could perform abortions. In the third trimester, once viability had been reached, the state had a critical interest in the preservation of life, which could only be overridden by significant threats to the woman's life or health. Thus abortion was still available, but the Court's design was to make late term abortions more difficult to obtain than those in the first trimester. The burden was on the pregnant woman to show that abortion was necessary to safeguard her life or health. In the light of *Roe*, one might legitimately ask how it could be that partial-birth abortions are occurring as frequently as they are.

Roe, however, was not the only abortion related Court decision handed down in January of 1973. In a companion case, *Doe v. Bolton*, the Court clarified the definition of a woman's health that could be jeopardized sufficiently to warrant a third trimester abortion. The Court ruled that a woman's health included factors that were much broader than simply her medical or physical health. They included her emotional and psychological health and what the court referred to as "familial" health. That is, the impact of having another child on the pregnant woman's family was considered a part of her health, and could include the woman's financial condition and even the health of the unborn child. That is, if the child was genetically handicapped, the impact on the family of raising such a challenged child could be considered in the assessment of the woman's health. The Court put it like this: "We agree that the medical judgment (about the woman's life or health being jeopardized) may be exercised in light of all factors—physical, emotional, psychological, familial, and the woman's age, relevant to the well-being of the patient. All these factors may relate to health. This allows the physician the room he needs to make his best medical judgment."[2]

In reality, the definition of health had been broadened and the decision so privatized that the result was predictable—abortion virtually on demand for virtually any reason, throughout the entire nine months of pregnancy. *Roe* and *Doe* together legalized abortion on demand in all three trimesters of pregnancy, thus setting the stage for partial-birth abortions, which occur today largely for the

same reasons that first trimester abortion do—as birth control measures of last resort. Had *Roe* alone been passed in January 1973, one could make a better case that abortion was legal up until the point of viability. But in concert with *Doe*, even late term abortions are legal, for virtually any reason. Thus, while *Roe* in itself limited late term abortions to those of necessity only, as broadened by *Doe*, it left a legacy that included the death of virtually full-term unborn children by means that, if the public were fully aware, would shock most. Under these Court decisions, life and death for the unborn third trimester child is literally a matter of inches, since once the child is fully out of the womb, ending the child's life is no longer abortion, but infanticide. Further, support for infanticide is growing. Take for example the widely publicized article in the well-respected *Journal of Medical Ethics*, the authors argue that "what we call 'after birth abortion' *should be permissible in all cases where abortion is, including cases where the newborn is not disabled*."[3]

INFERTILITY TREATMENTS

In the past twenty-five years, new treatments for infertility have enabled couples who are struggling to have children to conceive the child of their dreams. Treatments such as in vitro fertilization (IVF) have revolutionized the way infertility is treated and have given hope to infertile couples. Many other treatments for infertility involve a heightened risk of multiple pregnancies. For example, techniques as simple as intrauterine insemination (IUI), in which the husband's sperm is given technological assistance in reaching the egg in his wife's body, is now sometimes done in conjunction with the same high-powered fertility drugs used with IVF that enable a woman to release multiple eggs in a single cycle.

Some of the most celebrated multiple births have come as a result of IUI and fertility drugs. When IVF is performed, the woman is given the same drugs to enable her to release as many eggs as possible in a single cycle. The eggs are then harvested, fertilized in vitro, and then normally 3–4 embryos are implanted in the woman's uterus, though in some cases, more embryos are implanted. The remainder of the embryos, if any are left over, are stored by cryopreservation should the first round of implants fail and the couple have need for additional embryos to be implanted.

In both IUI and IVF, there is the risk that the couple will become pregnant with more unborn children than they either can safely carry or wish to have. This

risk is considered a necessary part of the process, since the most expensive part of the process is harvesting and fertilizing the eggs. Infertility physicians implant 3–4 embryos in IVF to give the couple the best chance at achieving a single pregnancy. But with IUI it is more difficult to say how many pregnancies are possible, since it is unknown prior to insemination how many eggs the woman has released. Thus, the risk of multiple pregnancies is actually greater with IUI in conjunction with fertility drugs than it is with IVF.

For some couples who have heard and read the accounts of couples who give birth to even larger numbers of children (for example, anywhere from 5–8 children), the risk of multiple pregnancies can be a daunting obstacle for those who want to utilize these technologies. But infertility clinics have managed this difficulty by offering a referral to selective termination. That is, if the couple achieves more pregnancies than they are comfortable with, for whatever the reason, the clinic will refer them to specialty abortion clinics that will reduce the number of pregnancies to the number the couple desires. Every couple at risk for multiple pregnancies is presented with the option of a referral for selective termination. The conventional wisdom is that clinics refer couples for selective termination in those cases in which they become pregnant with more pregnancies than the woman can safely carry, to avoid endangering her life or health, or the life or health of the unborn children. For example, in most cases of quadruplets or more, they must be delivered prematurely, and as a result have many medical problems due to insufficient development prior to birth. That presents a difficult moral dilemma for a couple when that is indeed the case. But the little known fact in this area is that every couple who utilizes a procedure that might result in multiple pregnancies is given the option of a selective termination referral, for any reason they choose. For example, if a couple gets pregnant with triplets through IVF, but they only desire a single child, they can have their number of pregnancies reduced from three to one.

The ease with which infertility clinics give selective termination referrals and the availability of selective termination for any reason (in reality, the couple does not even have to give a reason) is part of the legacy of abortion that compromises the moral status of embryos as well as fetuses. With abortion being legal on demand, it is a simple matter to refer couples for this procedure. Abortion has not only become the birth control of last resort, but as a result of its legality and social acceptance, selective termination has become the safety net under

the technologies of IVF and IUI. The callousness with which couples can do selective termination, when going to such lengths to conceive children, simply because they don't like the result of the procedure, is a very disturbing and problematic legacy of abortion. Even for someone who is pro-choice, the decision to take life deliberately created in the lab at great length and expense, should strike a person as problematic, and illustrates the callous disregard for unborn life.

Less direct a connection, but one worth mentioning, is the routine discarding of leftover embryos after a couple is finished with IVF. In order to minimize the expense of harvesting eggs, couples routinely fertilize all the eggs that are harvested, but only implant 3–4. That usually leaves some embryos left over for use at a later time should the couple not achieve a pregnancy. The embryos are placed in storage and thawed out to be implanted should the couple so desire. When the couple is finished with the process, usually as a result of becoming pregnant and achieving their goal, they do not have further use for the embryos. Generally, they are discarded, though at times, they are donated to another infertile couple or donated to research facilities. Embryos are widely regarded as "clumps of cells," or "a bag of marbles," yet the couples who have had children successfully through IVF have intuitions that tell them something quite different. They are often the ones who end up not making any decision on the disposition of leftover embryos, leaving them in storage indefinitely because of the difficulty in making the decision to discard them.

PRENATAL GENETIC TESTING

With the completion of the first draft of the Human Genome Project (HGP) in the early 2000s, we now have at our disposal much clearer information about the various genetic factors that contribute to a wide variety of diseases. Though gene therapy is still in the experimental stage and has had some significant steps backward in the past few years, the HGP has provided an extraordinary amount of information about the risks for disease that people face due to their genetic makeup. There are an increasing variety of diagnostic tests for people who might be at risk. For example, women who have a family history of breast cancer now have genetic diagnostic testing available to pinpoint the genetic factors that increase their risk of developing breast cancer. These tests do not generally establish a cause and effect link with a disease; they only identify risk factors for the person. Single gene diseases where there is a causal link between the genetic factor and the develop-

ment of the disease constitute an exception to this, as for example in the cases of Huntington's disease, cystic fibrosis, and Tay-Sachs disease. Of course, some of the diseases are treatable and some are not. In the former case, there is substantial benefit to knowing one's genetic risk factors.

These diagnostic tests are also available to pregnant women to test their unborn children for a variety of genetic anomalies. These are performed largely through amniocentesis, a procedure in which the unborn child's cells are obtained through the mother's amniotic fluid and then subject to genetic testing. In this area the moral status of a human person has been further compromised. Though claiming objectivity, the genetic counselors and physicians who test children in the womb often carry forward an assumption that is premised on the availability of abortion. That is, if the couple receives bad news back from their genetic testing, it is widely assumed that the couple will end the pregnancy, sparing the child a difficult life and the parents the task of raising a child with what could be severe challenges. The standard practice in the genetic testing and genetic counseling industry is to present the abortion alternative to every couple who receives bad news from testing. This abortion assumption can actually put the burden on the couple to justify why they are *keeping* the pregnancy when carrying a genetically anomalous child. Of course, this rationale for abortion in the case of genetic testing assumes a view that the unborn child is less than a full person. For only if one assumes that premise can the argument from handicap make any sense. That is, unless it is assumed that the unborn child is not a person, then there is no morally relevant difference between abortion for genetic problems and infanticide for genetic problems.

In order to avoid the necessity of abortion to deal with genetic anomalies, couples have another option, that of preimplantation genetic diagnosis (PGD). In this procedure, couples who are at risk for a specific genetic problem can conceive using IVF, screen the embryos prior to implantation, and then implant only the embryos that are free from the genetic anomaly. The rest, that is, the genetically defective embryos, are discarded, similar to embryos that are left over after infertility treatments. This is the standard of practice with PGD. For those who hold that embryos are persons, there is no morally relevant difference between abortion for genetic problems and discarding genetically defective embryos. By extension, embryos would have had even fewer rights, since they are not even implanted and exist outside the womb. It would seem that the desensitizing impact

of society's view of fetuses was quite easily applied to ex-utero embryos. Thus the standard of practice in both infertility and genetic testing could include discarding embryos at least as easily, if not more so, than abortion of already implanted and developing unborn children.

EMBRYO AND EMBRYONIC STEM CELL RESEARCH

With the advent of technology that can isolate embryonic stem cells, embryo research has gained new significance and greater public prominence. With all the hope for medical progress from stem cell research, the source of these stem cells was easily pushed into the background. Originally, the source of stem cells was to be the embryos left over from infertility treatments, analogous to using fetal tissue from induced abortions. Proponents reasoned that since the embryos were going to be discarded, why not put them to good use?

The debate over the use of embryonic stem cells indicates that the legacy of abortion and the resultant low view of fetuses and embryos contributed to the ease with which the source of these stem cells was viewed as irrelevant. Concerns about the destruction of human life in order to harvest stem cells were dismissed as "symbolic." In other cases, views that upheld the moral status of embryos were minimized because of their religious roots, even though opponents had sought to make the argument against stem cell research on the basis of publicly accessible reasons. In the public debate, for proponents the potential for medical progress trumped any concerns about the destruction of embryos.

This low view of embryos, as is the case in IVF and genetic testing, is an outgrowth of society's low view of a human person at the beginning of life. If it is permissible to end a pregnancy for virtually any reason, including the health of the mother, then by extension, ending the lives of ex-utero embryos, particularly if doing so could potentially save the lives of others, must surely be permissible.

PHYSICIAN ASSISTED SUICIDE

It is more difficult to identify the legacy of *Roe* when one moves from the beginning edge to the end. But even at the end of life in the debate over physician assisted suicide (PAS), the impact of the abortion decision has been felt. In 1973, opponents of abortion predicted that the arguments used to justify abortion would someday be used to justify various forms of euthanasia. It wasn't until 1996 that such a prediction was realized, when the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals ex-

plicitly used the abortion decisions as the basis for its ruling that laws prohibiting PAS are unconstitutional.[4] This ruling was overturned upon appeal to the United States Supreme Court in 1997.[5]

This is the example of the logic of abortion coming full circle and affecting the end of life. In the decision issued by the Court of Appeals, they relied heavily on the abortion precedent. The Court of Appeals put it like this:

> In deciding right-to-die cases, *we are guided by the [Supreme] Court's approach to the abortion cases*. *Casey* in particular provides a powerful precedent, for in that case the Court had the opportunity to evaluate its past decisions and to determine whether to adhere to its original judgment . . . the fundamental message of that case lies in its statements regarding the type of issue that confronts us here: "These matters, involving the most intimate and personal choices a person may make in a lifetime, choices central to personal dignity and autonomy, are central to the liberty protected by the Fourteenth Amendment." (Casey, 112 S. Ct. 2791, at 1807 [sic], 1992)[6]

The Court of Appeals, in their view, extended the notion of liberty and privacy to include assistance in dying in the same way that they read the Supreme Court in their extension of liberty and privacy to apply to abortion decisions. Further, the Court of Appeals goes on to admit that they found the Court's reasoning "highly instructive" and "almost prescriptive" for deciding the right to die cases. The Court put it in this way:

> Like the decision of whether or not to have an abortion, the decision how and when to die is one of "the most intimate and personal choices a person may make in a lifetime, a choice central to personal dignity and autonomy." A competent terminally ill adult, having lived nearly the full measure of his life, has a strong liberty interest in choosing a dignified and human death rather than being reduced at the end of his existence to a childlike state of helplessness, diapered, sedated, incontinent. How a person dies not only determines the nature of the final period of his existence, but in many cases, the enduring memories held by those who love him.[7]

What is often assumed is that the moral status of the terminally ill person cannot be the same as a healthy adult. This reflects a functional view of a person that stands at odds with the substance view defended by J. P. throughout his work. But what seems clear is the impact our views of a person at the beginning of life are to our views of a person at the end of life. Both seem to be examples of viewing a

person not as something they are but determined by something they can or cannot do. Even though the Supreme Court overturned this decision, in popular culture and among many in the bioethics community, the notion that abortion and PAS are analogous is still a powerful one.

A big part of the legacy of J. P.'s work revolves around the notion of the human person. All the above-mentioned areas of bioethics assume certain answers to this fundamental question.

To be clear, the designation of a "person" has less to do with science and more to do with a being's moral status, implying rights and protections that follow from being a person. What science can tell us is what a human being is—that from conception forward, the union of egg and sperm is a living and separate human entity with its own unique genetic code (except in the case of identical twins). We tend to regard embryos like this. If embryos were neither living nor human, then researchers and health clinics would not be nearly so interested in their stem cells. Of course, embryos are not fully mature human beings. But neither are post-viability fetuses, nor newborns, nor toddlers, nor preschoolers . . . etc. But from the moment of conception, the embryo has all it needs to mature, if given nutrients and shelter that the womb normally provides. Our use of language here is important. Embryos don't *become* fetuses; fetuses don't *become* newborns. Nor do embryos *develop* into fetuses and fetuses into newborns. This terminology suggests that in the process they actually become something different than they already are. But that's not true. Embryos *mature* into fetuses, which *mature* into newborns, which *mature* into toddlers . . . etc.

The substance view of a person, which J. P. has championed for some time, begins with our commonsense view that a person is something we are, not something we do. In addition, a substance view emphasizes that there is something fundamental about persons that enables them to have the same identity through time and change. Our continuity of personal identity through time and change is grounded in an immaterial essence. This is also known as an *essential* view of a person, or an *endowment* view of a person.[8]

What underscores the substance view of a person is the way we view moral responsibility and criminal justice. If someone commits a crime, and it takes years to capture the person and bring him or her to justice, we assume that the person standing before the court is the same person who committed the crime (unless it's a case of mistaken identity). If the person argued that they had undergone

physical changes, such as loss of hair, cosmetic surgery, even amputation, and as a result, was not the same person who had committed the crime, they would likely be laughed out of court, and justifiably so. The reason is that the court operates on a substance view of a person—that there is a continuity of personal identity that endures through time and change. But if human persons are nothing more than a collection of physical parts and properties, then there is no adequate basis for recognizing this continuity of identity. In fact, the person in court could argue that he or she has undergone significant changes, such as recycling through all their cells (which we all do every seven years) and make a plausible case that they are not the same entity that committed the crime. But our intuition about persons tells us something different—that a person is what we are, not what we do.

Again based on our commonsense view of a human being, every human person is the result of a continual process of growth and development that begins at conception—not much debate about that, though I would use the term "maturity" instead of "development" here. Further, *there is no morally or ontologically relevant break in the process from conception to birth*. All points along the continuum from conception to birth are arbitrary points of delineation that have no necessary connection to the moral and ontological status of a person.

Some will agree that these "decisive moments" are not so decisive when it comes to what constitutes a person. They argue that the indicators of personhood include things like self-consciousness, self-awareness, awareness of one's environment, sentience (the ability to experience sensations such as pain), and some capacity for relationships. On this type of functional view, the unborn, the seriously mentally impaired, those in a vegetative state, and others would be human beings, but not persons, and would not have the rights of persons. Most who hold to after birth abortion/infanticide base it on some sort of functional view of a person.

This functional view of a person suffers from at least two significant shortcomings. First, there are times in the lives of most of us when we don't meet the functional criteria for being a person. Take someone who is in a reversible coma, or more commonly, who is under general anesthesia. If the latter is working properly, the person has lost all functional criteria, albeit temporarily. But as soon as you make the counter argument that it's temporary, you've admitted that during that temporary time period, there's something else besides those functions, that grounds that person's status, and corresponding rights. Since they don't have those functions, what keeps them a person sounds a lot like an *essence*.

A further weakness of this view is that it leads to a very counterintuitive notion that being a person is a matter of degree. If personhood is degreed, so are the rights and protectability of the person. For example, a person in a vegetative state, or at the end of a terminal illness who has a lower level of functioning would have fewer rights to life, and thus laws authorizing removing of treatments from them or actually putting them to death, with or without their consent, would be plausible. And that's the real problem. You can't have personhood being *degreed* and have *equal* rights at the same time. To have a robust commitment to equal rights, it's critical to safeguard the inherent and equal dignity of all human beings regardless of their ability to perform certain functions deemed critical for persons to perform.

I commend J. P. for his providing a solid, well thought-out metaphysical framework for defending a substance view of a human person. I'm grateful for his contribution in undergirding bioethics, especially the pro-life version with this important philosophical grounding.

Notes

1. J. P. Moreland & Scott Rae, *Body and Soul: Human Nature and the Crisis in Ethics* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000).
2. *Doe v. Bolton*, 93 S. Ct. 739 (1973) at 747.
3. Alberto Giubilini and Francesca Minerva, "After-Birth Abortion: Why Should the Baby Live?" *Journal of Medical Ethics* (forthcoming).
4. *Compassion in Dying v. Washington*, 49 F. 3d 790 (1996).
5. *Washington v. Glucksberg,* 117 S. Ct. 2258 (1997).
6. *Compassion in Dying v. Washington*, 79 F.3d 790 (1996), cited in Michael Uhlmann, *Last Rights: Assisted Suicide and Euthanasia Debated* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998), 487.
7. *Washington v. Glucksberg,* cited in Michael Uhlmann, *Last Rights: Assisted Suicide and Euthanasia Debated*, 493–94.
8. See for example, Christopher Kaczor, *The Ethics of Abortion: Women's Rights, Human Life, and the Question of Justice* (New York: Routledge, 2011).

PART THREE

Living for Christ *in the* World

In the World: Self-Disclosure *as* Cultural Apologetics

TIM MUEHLHOFF

> I began to wake up at two or three o'clock in the morning with a racing heart and an anxious sweat. I couldn't get back to sleep. During the day, I experienced the tightness of anxiety throughout my chest and stomach. I tried to control my fears subconsciously by obsessing on one or two of them. But then I began to fear irrational things, such as getting fired or losing my home. I was afraid of life.[1]

WHAT IS YOUR REACTION to such transparency? Does it surprise you? Maybe even make you uncomfortable? Why would one of the leading Christian apologists make such a stark admission? As the essays in this book attest, J. P. Moreland has made his reputation by defending the Christian worldview with logic and cogent philosophical arguments. We stand in awe of his intellect. What is to be gained by informing us that he wakes with a racing heart and is driven by irrational fears? Do such revelations hurt or enhance his credibility? "I can't stand aloof leaders or communicators," J. P. states. "We must be real."[2] This essay explores J. P.'s contribution to cultural apologetics by his decision to be *real* by going public with personal struggles of anxiety and depression. Specifically, we'll consider the role of cultural apologetics in advancing the Christian worldview, how narrative theory helps us understand the power of shared stories, and how self-disclosure adds to communication competency.

In order to understand why J. P. would be so candid about anxiety attacks and bouts with depression we need to understand the role of cultural apologetics in general, and specifically J. P.'s conceptualization of it.

CULTURAL APOLOGETICS

Apologist Peter Kreeft asks a provocative question in suggesting that Christian communicators need to be conversant in both timeless and timely arguments.

> Do we need a new apologetic for our new age? Yes and no. Yes, new diseases need new medicines, new ignorances need new remedial courses. But no, the content of the remedial courses is not new, for neither the laws of logic nor the facts about God have changed. A new apologetic? Yes, because apologetics is a dialogue between two people, and the speaker should always be aware of how his listener's mind has changed if he is to make contact. . . . The target moves but the bullets remain the same.[3]

To be effective, Christian communicators must find this balance. First, he or she must be steeped in theology and classical apologetics. What are the deep and unchanging truths about God? What arguments for His existence and the Christian worldview have stood the test of time? Conversely, an apologist must also know how today's culture uniquely shapes the perspectives of those he or she will encounter at Starbucks, or in graduate classrooms. The goal of cultural apologetics is to assess how cultural trends inform and mold a person's perspective. What salient forces within a culture contribute to how a person thinks and behaves? The necessity of understanding how our surroundings impact us is not a new focus created by modern apologists. The men of Issachar were of great value to King David and Israel precisely because they "had understanding of the times" (1 Chron. 12:32). In commanding us to renew our minds before God, the apostle Paul states that we first must become aware of how we are being conformed to "the pattern of this world"(Rom. 12:2). The word *world* (aion) is a complex term denoting all "that floating mass of thoughts, opinions, maxims, speculations, hopes, impulses, aims, aspirations, at any time current in the world . . . which constitute a most real and effective power."[4] Christian communicators must understand how the thoughts, opinions, and impulses of *this* current time in the world uniquely influence an audience. The cultural impulse J. P. chooses to address in much of his writings is our hopelessly modern and deficient conceptualization of happiness.

Defining Happiness

"We Americans are obsessed with being happy," J. P. states. "But we are also terribly confused about what happiness is."[5] How does an individual or culture go about defining a word or concept such as happiness? Words or symbols are ambiguous because their meanings are often unclear and dependent upon context. Even seemingly simple words can have different connotations for different people. Jacques Ellul writes:

> Even the simplest word—*bread*, for instance—involves all sorts of connotations. In a mysterious way, it calls up many images which form a dazzling rainbow, a multitude of echoes. When the word *bread* is pronounced, I cannot help but think of the millions of people who have none. I cannot avoid the image of a certain baker friend of mine, and of the time during the Nazi occupation when bread was so scarce and of such poor quality. The communion service comes to me: the breaking of bread at the Last Supper and the image of Jesus, both present and future.[6]

If the word *bread* can arouse such varying connotations, imagine how a complex concept like happiness can evoke confusion. The arbitrary, abstract, and ambiguous nature of words adds both to the mystery and frustration of symbol dependent communication. As Ellul concludes, "All language is more or less a riddle to be figured out."[7] How the riddle of words will be solved is largely dependent on the particular speech community to which you give credence and interpretive authority.

To inform readers what our current definition of happiness is, J. P. consults a common cultural artifact—a dictionary. In it, we read that happiness is "a sense of pleasurable satisfaction."[8] J. P. points out that for many Americans happiness is associated with a feeling that closely resembles pleasure. From this definition springs a powerful ideology where "the good life" is reduced to a "life of good feeling" which becomes a "goal of most people for themselves and their children."[9] Once J. P. establishes his touch-point, he seeks to show the inevitable result of such a view. "Think about it. If happiness is having an internal feeling of fun or pleasurable satisfaction, and is our main goal, where will we place our focus all day long?"[10] J. P. concludes that the focus will be solely individualistic and the "result will be a culture of self-absorbed individuals who can't live for something larger than we are."[11] In the end we'll become *empty selves* who lack conviction, fill needs with consumer products, and increasingly slide more deeply into an

ideology that fosters anxiety and depression. His assessment is stark: "Slowly, but surely, the contemporary notion of happiness is killing our relationships, our religious fervor, our very lives."[12] J. P. understands that one of the most troublesome aspects of ideologies is that they are often unreflectively embraced and their implications are not immediately seen. Before we consider J. P.'s rhetorical strategy for challenging our cultural view of happiness and establishing credibility through self-disclosure, it will be helpful to define culture and discuss some of its intricate components.

Culture

While there are many definitions of culture, it is useful to view culture as "a community of meaning and a shared body of local knowledge."[13] The institutions, structures, customs, and practices of a culture work to mirror and support this shared body of collective knowledge. Specifically, institutions, customs, and cultural practices position certain social groups, actions, and values as good, natural, and normal, while identifying others as bad, unnatural, and abnormal. Social groups who have the power to name an action or behavior normal or good wield considerable social power. Within each culture there are *co-cultures* around which individuals choose to identify with and support, fostering a common narrative that advances a particular perception of race, religion, ethnicity, ethics, sexual orientation and so forth.

Not everyone born into a particular culture perceives that culture in the same way. Standpoint theorists argue that a person's social location within culture and the particular groups he or she is born into powerfully shape how he or she thinks about others, themselves, and the social world. The social, material, and symbolic circumstances of particular groups influence and guide group member's perceptions of all facets of life. For example, a student raised in a white, middle class location may not receive much encouragement to develop friendships with lower class, African-American classmates. Within certain locations, the African-American student is not just viewed as being different in regard to race or class, but the difference is widened to include a sense of what is, and is not valuable.

The roots of standpoint theory are linked to the observations of nineteenth century German philosopher Georg Hegel who noted that the institution of slavery is perceived differently based on social location. The slave owner or master perceives slavery only as it relates to his self-interests. He has no need to be aware

of the slave's perspective, needs, or desires other than how those influence production. The slave, however, needs to be aware not only of his or her own needs, but also must be keenly attuned to the needs and perspective of the master. Hegel's conclusion was that, where power relationships exist, there is never one single perspective of society. Ironically, while the perspectives of those in lower class locations tend to be ignored or devalued, they may actually have a more comprehensive perspective of society than those in power. Regardless of what culture, subculture, or social position a person belongs to certain concepts come into play.

Ideology

Ideology is a comprehensive set of ideas, values, and beliefs that organize a group or society's understanding of reality. It is a code of meanings that informs and encourages people to see social and personal life in a particular way. "An ideology is a systematic and comprehensive set of ideas relating to and explaining social and political life."[14] Growing up in East Detroit as the son of a factory worker, a powerful ideology within my subculture was that hard work defined a person. In this life, a person needs to earn his or her keep. A *real* job was one that involved physical activity, endurance, and commitment. A good life was one in which a person provided for his family and gave back to the community. It is a set of ideas—an ideology—that still vivifies my daily experience.

Hegemony

Hegemony is more pervasive and abstract than ideology and consists of the assumptions we hold that "go without saying."[15] It is a system of meaning and values that we embrace without reflection or resistance. For example, while growing up in East Detroit, I slowly began to question whether a real job had to be physically demanding. Is it possible that a real job could be something that requires little physical labor, but demanded creativity like being an artist or a professor? While I began to question the pervading ideology of my community, it never occurred to me to question larger hegemonic issues such as the necessity of work or education itself. Why do I have to get a job at all? Do I need a formal education? Is a high school or college education necessary to be successful or have status? "These beliefs are commonly accepted by many people in our culture, but they are socially constructed ideas reinforced seemingly from every direction—from the family, the media, and school itself."[16]

Interpellation

The theory of interpellation suggests that we begin to accept a particular ideology when we identify ourselves with individuals, definitions, or situations found in mass media, the arts, or daily life. We insert ourselves into the situation and adopt the ensuing values and perspectives. Over time these values and perspectives seem real to us and inform our expectations and experience. Marxist philosopher and social critic Louis Althusser likened interpellation to how we hail a taxi by calling out to the driver and getting his attention. In the same way, ideology hails us and gains our attention amid a multitude of influences. J. P. shares a powerful example of these influences when he describes the pre-game speech his daughter's soccer coach gave encouraging the girls to forget about competing and merely to have fun.[17] The coach's perspective, echoing Cyndi Lauper's song, "Girls Just Wanna Have Fun," is a subtle, yet powerful form of interpellation that supports the ideology that pleasure—not competing, discipline, or hard work—is the goal of life.

Theatre of Struggle

If hegemony is pervasive and assumed, then how did we ever discover it in the first place, let alone resist it? The answer is that certain individuals "are improperly socialized and thus are able to see things that most people, who have been properly socialized, are blind to."[18] Every once in a while a subculture produces a person like the Buddha, who questioned individualistic materialism and desire after stepping outside the ideology of his father's palace, or like Martin Luther King Jr., who indicted the unspoken hegemony of the then racist South. These individuals, for whatever reason, started to see political and social life differently, resulting in a questioning of the status quo. When a person does so, he or she enters into what cultural theorist Stuart Hall calls "a theatre of struggle."[19] To oppose a dominant ideology we must first become aware of the dangers of a particular set of beliefs and resist them by finding an alternative ideology, either created by others or us. It is this theatre of struggle that J. P. wants to create for modern consumers of culture as he proposes an alternative to our current and destructive ideology of happiness.

J. P.'S CULTURAL APOLOGETIC

If the above conversation about culture seems overly technical, keep in mind that "culture is nothing more than the constant and curious conversation that goes on

between every one of us and the environment in which we reside—we ourselves being part of that environment."[20] J. P. conceptualizes cultural apologetics as an entry point into this cultural conversation. "How can you allow people to hear you?" is the fundamental question of the apologist.[21] J. P. suggests that cultural apologetics can be broken down into two considerations. First, find out where people are at and select a touch point. Second, help them understand where ideas will lead if not challenged.

In attempting to cause readers to consider the implications of an ideology that equates happiness with a pleasurable feeling, J. P. has a rhetorical decision to make. Does he address an audience of empty selves struggling with anxiety and depression from a detached, analytical position, or does he address individuals from a personal perspective as one who also struggles? "I am convinced that this inability to face our deepest anxieties is at the heart of why we have trouble being happy."[22] Is the use of "our" or "we" merely rhetorical devices alluding to a literary solidarity, or a personal admission? J. P. clarifies:

> If you are like me, you want to live a life of integrity. But there's a problem. I find myself to be a broken person in so many ways, and these areas of fracture and fragility easily distract me from living a full, rich life with the sort of wisdom I deeply desire. Therein lies a big story that I will unpack in the pages that follow.[23]

In addressing the ideology of happiness, J. P. makes two rhetorical decisions. First, he chooses to identify with a fractured and struggling audience by describing a faith journey that includes fractures and struggles. Second, he decides to present his journey in a narrative form that he carefully unpacks for readers. Both decisions warrant our attention.

Identification

Rhetorician James Herrick argues that every speaker must fundamentally deal with the issue of identification. "You persuade a man only insofar as you can talk his language by speech, gesture, tonality, order, image, attitude, idea, identifying your way with his."[24] The essence of rhetoric is to look past the many differences between individuals to find common meaning and ways of acting together that promote unification and cooperation. J. P. attempts to cultivate identification not by adopting the persona of an aloof academic theorizing about ideology, but a co-traveler choosing to enter a theatre of struggle while opposing a dominant and

flawed ideology. "If you and I were talking over coffee, I would look you in the eye and say with complete honesty and conviction that my life cannot be explained without the existence of the Christian God and the truth of Christianity."[25] However, the life he presents is not a pristine Christian journey with all struggles and doubts minimized or removed. Theologian Frederick Buechner calls such portrayals of the Christian life "highly edited versions" of ourselves where failures, disappointments, or shortcomings have been sanitized.[26] J. P. does little editing when presenting his journey. "I wish to say at the onset that I have had periods of dryness in my pilgrimage, time where God seemed absent and hidden, numerous times when God said no to my prayer requests and other times when I sensed no answer at all, just complete silence."[27]

In part, J. P. hopes to counteract the stereotype of distant, cerebral philosophers by presenting an unedited version of his spiritual pilgrimage. "The danger of being a philosopher is that you can start to believe it's possible to merely live a life of the mind. In reaching out to others, I want to expose my heart."[28] By exposing his heart, J. P. is hoping to avoid what Marxist theorist Antonio Gramsci calls the "intellectual's error" that consists in believing that we can gain understanding without engaging our passions or feelings.[29] To hear such a noted defender of the faith admit that sometimes he only encounters silence when seeking God is rare and, to many of us, refreshing. What influenced such candor? "Reading *A Grief Observed* gave me permission to feel that way about God and to be open with others. I view it as a type of permission giver."[30]

The permission giver J. P. refers to is a series of personal reflections written by C. S. Lewis after the death of his wife, Joy Gresham. Shortly after her death Lewis writes: "Where is God? . . . Go to Him when your need is desperate, when all other help is in vain, and what do you find? A door slammed in your face, and the sound of bolting and double bolting on the inside. After that, silence."[31] In commenting on such raw confessions, Lewis describes them as literary shouts of pain, rather than coherent thoughts. "I wrote that last night," reflects Lewis. "It was a yell rather than a thought."[32] His scattered observations were a private means of coping with bereavement and overwhelming emotional pain. Even in his pain, Lewis understood that such stark honesty might be disturbing to the faithful and thus never intended to publish them. Only after his friend and publicist, Roger Lancelyn Green, pleaded with him to publish his thoughts did Lewis consent to do so under a pen name, N.W. Clerk.[33] J. P. also understands the risk of making

private thoughts public, but feels the reward outweighs the risk. "By sharing my struggles I can give hope that these struggles can be overcome."[34] The struggles common to many Americans can be overcome not by attempting to make the dominant ideology work, but by adopting a set of beliefs that are countercultural. If individuals are to question today's conception of happiness, then they'll have to resist a seemingly intuitive hegemony that defines it as pleasure. "Real life does not come naturally. It is counterintuitive."[35]

Telling His Story

"Therein lies a big story that I will unpack. . . ." Not only does J. P. decide to be transparent, he selects the language of our culture—narrative. In the past thirty years, the single most dominant theory to transform how we view human communication is narrative theory. This theory, conceived by Walter Fisher, asks and answers a key ontological question: What is the essence of human nature? Fisher argues that we are storytelling animals who "experience and comprehend life as a series of ongoing narratives, as conflicts, characters, beginnings, middles, and ends."[36] Because we are human storytellers who continually narrate our lives and experiences by putting things in sequence and order, we are persuaded, or moved more by stories than an array of statistics, or purely logical deduction.[37] Fisher was skeptical of our Western emphasis on logic and rationality as the dominant motivators for human decision making. He did not reject Western rationality, but viewed it as overly restrictive. In response, he contrasted what he described as a *rational world paradigm* with a *narrative paradigm*. In a rational paradigm people are seen expressively as rational beings that make decisions based on logical arguments and reasoning, while in a narrative paradigm people are storytelling beings that make decisions based on good reasons for accepting or rejecting stories.

Central to a narrative paradigm is the concept of narrative rationality. While stories move us, not all stories are equally compelling. As storytelling beings, we judge a story according to its fidelity, which Fisher describes as the extent to which a story resonates with a person's own experience.[38] In short, does this story resonate with my life and are the characters believable? "Obviously some stories are better stories than others, more coherence, more 'true' to the way people and the world are—in perceived fact and value."[39]

In telling his story, would J. P.'s narrative ring true with his audience? J. P. notes that according to leading psychologists the baby boom generation has experienced

a tenfold increase in depression and anxiety. If true, then many of his listeners themselves would make up part of that increase—readers who would consider his narrative and subsequent exhortation to redefine happiness "as a life well lived, a life of virtue and character."[40] Yet, central to the criteria of fidelity are salient questions: Do I find the character believable? Is he or she one of us? Does he or she understand my narrative? Pursuing identification, J. P. writes:

> I found myself overwhelmed by a set of major stressors that sent me spiraling into an emotional tailspin . . . two related to extended family, another concerning an unexpected financial burden, then the discovery of the body of a friend who died from alcoholism—all ganged up on me to overwhelm my emotional resources. Further, I was diagnosed with a rare skin disease that placed me at high risk for colon and genitourinary cancer. . . . To top it off, I was worn out from work.[41]

After reading his confession, what would a reader conclude? That as a Christian intellectual, J. P. navigates life untouched by worry or stress? Or, that he is a man who struggles with family issues, financial pressure, tragedy, health concerns, and over-exhaustion? Does his narrative ring true with an audience comprised of individuals facing the same challenges and stressors? By telling such a transparent narrative, J. P. understands that all communication contains both a content and relational level.

Communication is complicated by the recognition that all communication involves two levels of meaning. The *content level* expresses the literal or denotative meaning of the words being spoken. The *relationship level* expresses the amount of acknowledgment, responsiveness, and power that exists between two people. This dual level of communication is evident in the Scriptures when the apostle Paul admonishes us to speak "truth [content] in love [relational]" (Eph. 4:15). Similarly, Peter encourages believers to be prepared to "give an answer [content]" to everyone who inquires about our faith, but to do it with "gentleness and respect [relational]" (1 Peter 3:15). Communication theorists agree that if the relational level is lacking, it greatly compromises or nullifies content. In other words, if a person does not feel acknowledged or respected, our content will be easily dismissed. When it comes to the content level, J. P. excels at explaining complex philosophical or apologetic arguments in defense of the Christian worldview. By crafting a narrative that not only acknowledges the struggles of his listeners but shares them, his content is significantly augmented by the relational.

COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE

Communication scholars use the phrase, "communication competence" to identify individuals whose communication is both effective and appropriate. *Effectiveness* involves the ability to construct, present, and achieve communication goals in a given context. It is one thing to recognize that a friend or family member needs comfort, and another altogether to craft and present a message that accomplishes the goal of providing aid and care. The same is true in applied apologetics. While our vast array of apologetic arguments, ranging from the cosmological to the teleological to the moral, may be sophisticated and logical, we must ask if they are actually effective in convincing people of God's existence? The goals of rhetoric primarily focus on achieving specific results, such as voting for a particular candidate, or persuading a person of God's existence. As the essays in this book attest, J. P. is exceptional at presenting arguments that actually work with both the intellectual elite and an audience member with no apologetic background.

Communication competence also includes a focus on *appropriateness*, which entails adapting our communication goals and style to a particular context. A word spoken in the right circumstances at the right time, suggests the ancient sage, is like "apples of gold in settings of silver" (Prov. 25:1). Situational factors such as the person with whom we are speaking, timing, cultural and social setting, and existing communication norms must all be considered. It is here that J. P. continues to adapt as a communicator. In a culture steeped in narrative that continues to define happiness in ways that foster anxiety and stress, J. P. adopts a rhetorical strategy that includes telling his story with candor. By establishing the relational element through the narrative of his life complete with honest self-disclosure, people are given access to the authentic, life-giving content of his words. "Being authentic," concludes J. P., "is to be vulnerable."[42]

Notes

1. J. P. Moreland and Klaus Issler, *The Lost Virtue of Happiness: Discovering the Disciplines of the Good Life* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2006), 156.
2. Personal correspondence, February 12, 2013.
3. Peter Kreeft, *Fundamentals of the Faith: Essays in Christian Apologetics* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1991), 17.
4. Quoted in Kenneth Wuest, *Word Studies in the Greek New Testament*, Vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1955), 207.
5. Moreland and Issler, *The Lost Virtue of Happiness*, 14.

6. Jacques Ellul, "Seeing and Hearing: Prolegomena," *The Reach of Dialogue: Confirmation, Voice, and Community*, eds. Rob Anderson, Kenneth Cissna, and Ronald Arnett (Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press, 1994), 121.
7. Ibid., 123.
8. Moreland and Issler, *The Lost Virtue of Happiness*, 16.
9. Ibid., 16.
10. Ibid., 17
11. Ibid., 23.
12. Ibid.
13. Alberto Gonzales, Marsha Houston, and Victoria Chen, "Introduction," *Our Voices: Essays in Culture, Ethnicity, and Communication*, eds. Alberto Gonzales, Marsha Houston, and Victoria Chen (Los Angeles: Roxbury, 2004), 5.
14. Arthur Asa Berger, *Cultural Criticism: A Primer of Key Concepts* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1995), 58.
15. Ibid., 63.
16. Stephen W. Littlejohn, *Theories of Human Communication* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1996), 235.
17. The coach specifically said, "Girls, don't worry about the score. The reason we play soccer is to have fun; so let's try to have a blast during the second half and go home happy whatever the result." Moreland and Issler, *Lost Virtue of Happiness*, 16.
18. Berger, *Cultural Criticism*, 64.
19. Stuart Hall, "The Problem of Ideology—Marxism without Guarantees," *Journal of Communication Inquiry* 10 (1986): 28–44.
20. Richard Lints, *The Fabric of Theology: A Prolegomenon to Evangelical Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1993), 104.
21. This quotation and Moreland's view of cultural apologetics is based on personal correspondence, February 12, 2013.
22. J. P. Moreland, *The God Question: An Invitation to a Life of Meaning* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2009), 18.
23. Ibid., 9.
24. James Herrick, *The History and Theory of Rhetoric: An Introduction*, 3rd ed. (New York: Pearson Education, 1997), 223.
25. Moreland, *The God Question*, 131.
26. Frederick Buechner, *Telling Secrets* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1991), 100.
27. Moreland, *The God Question*, 132.
28. Personal correspondence, February 12, 2013.
29. Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* (New York: International Publishers, 1971), 418.
30. Personal correspondence, February 12, 2013.
31. C. S. Lewis, *A Grief Observed* (New York: Bantam, 1976), 4.

32. Ibid.
33. To read an engaging and insightful synopsis of *A Grief Observed* and Lewis's struggle to write it, consult Walter Hooper, *C. S. Lewis: Companion & Guide* (New York: HarperCollins, 1996).
34. Personal correspondence, February 12, 2013.
35. Moreland and Issler, *The Lost Virtue of Happiness*, 14.
36. Walter R. Fisher, *Human Communication as Narration: Toward a Philosophy of Reason, Value, and Action* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1987), 24.
37. It is worthy to consider how much Jesus uses narrative to explain key theological concepts. For example, when the Pharisees complain about Him keeping company with tax collectors and sinners, Jesus decides to teach about the vastness and indiscriminant nature of the Father's love. To do so He crafts three stories focusing on a shepherd who searches for a lost sheep, a woman frantic to find a lost coin, and a father who waits for his wayward son (Luke 15). Each story represents God's enduring love. Jesus understood that a well-crafted story would be universally moving and memorable.
38. Narrative rationality also includes the criteria of coherence. When encountering a story, we ask if all parts of the story seem to fit together in a believable fashion, or do elements strain our sensibilities? Given the plot and cast of characters, does the ending seem valid? In short, does the story make sense to us? This particular criterion has interesting implications for apologetics. Considering the resurrection narrative through the criterion of coherence yields persuasive results. Given our cast of characters (common individuals turned disciples) what makes the most sense in explaining their conversion into bold proclaimers of the gospel after the death of Christ? Did they merely get their act together on their own, or did something extraordinary happen to bolster their commitment and faith and cause them to risk persecution? Applying coherence, what element—post-mortem appearances by Christ or human resolve—would make the story most believable?
39. Fisher, *Human Communication as Narration*, 68.
40. Moreland and Issler, *The Lost Virtue of Happiness*, 25.
41. Ibid., 155.
42. Personal correspondence, February 12, 2013.

Jesus, the Paradigmatic Exemplar in Gethsemane: An Effective Model *to* Guide Spiritual Formation*

KLAUS ISSLER

CONSIDER THE CONCEPTUAL distance between these two statements:

(1) "Jesus Christ is not just another human being, but the paradigmatic human being. . . Christian faith is a matter of becoming a certain sort of person. It is a matter of becoming like Jesus."[1]

(2) "Christian ethics purports to centre on the life of Christ, but little of it actually does so. . . . Christian thinkers no doubt agree that Jesus was paradigmatically good, but when this belief is incorporated into a theory [of Christian ethics], it too often amounts to nothing more than secular ethics plus an example."[2]

This chapter offers a small contribution toward placing Jesus Christ as central for Christian living and ethics, in both theory and practice.[3] A model for our formation practice today is proposed, based on the examination of Jesus' distressful experience in Gethsemane.

J. P. Moreland affirms such a Christocentric focus for contemporary disciples in the kingdom:

> [Jesus'] invitation to "follow him" is actually an invitation to enter a different kind of life and to learn from Jesus himself how to live well. Acceptance of this invitation provides the believer with the power and resources to learn how to live a radically new kind of life from above and in approximation to the sort of life Jesus himself lived.[4]

Within the scope of J. P.'s writing can be found contributions on matters of spiritual formation and Christian living (contributions that can also be found in the writings of his doctoral mentor, Dallas Willard). In J. P.'s manifesto, *The Kingdom Triangle*, he offers a renewed vision of a distinctively "thick" Christian worldview to overcome the encroaching "thin" worldviews that eviscerate a robust conception of truth. J. P. proposes that the Christian church give a concerted commitment to three kingdom emphases (i.e., the "Kingdom triangle")—identified in the book's subtitle—"recover the Christian mind, renovate the soul, and restore the Spirit's power." J. P. asks, "Why can't one be intellectually careful, emotionally together, and conformable with a life of intimacy with God and a vibrant inner life, and one who is learning to be naturally supernatural?"[5]

The present chapter on Jesus' Gethsemane experience explores further terrain regarding J. P.'s second leg (Christian inner life and spiritual formation), while offering a cogent discussion that hopefully exemplifies valuing the first leg (Christian intellectual life). From Jesus' example in Gethsemane it is possible to discover a patterned response to trying times that has application for the formation of our character in general. Furthermore in this Gethsemane episode, we hear Jesus' teaching that without reliance on divine resources, we cannot effectively resist temptation, a critical component of experiencing a flourishing life. The first part of the chapter will set a context for developing the formation model, by considering the perspective Jesus brought with Him into the garden. Then we will look more closely at the Gethsemane encounter in order to clarify a pattern of actions from Jesus' example to devise a framework for our practice of forming our inner life through God's empowerment.

JESUS' CHALLENGE TO HIS DISCIPLES: WATCH AND PRAY

To understand Jesus' mindset that informs the why behind His own concerted actions in the garden, consider His charge to the sleeping disciples. "Watch and pray so that you may not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Matt. 26:41; Mark 14:38). We will consider the first line, and then the second line.

Gethsemane as a Temptation Zone

Notice that Jesus regards Gethsemane as a "temptation" scene. The Greek word *peirasmos* is translated as "test, trial, tempting, and temptation."[6] James chapter 1 employs this same Greek term with this array of meanings (e.g., a general trial, James 1:2, 12; temptation to do evil, James 1:13). Trials are common in this life (1 Cor. 10:13), even for Jesus—Hebrews informs us that Jesus was genuinely tempted (Heb. 2:18; 4:15). Trials are occasions to share the sufferings of Christ (1 Peter 4:13) and to form Christian character (James 1:2–4). Through trials, God tests and approves our faith (1 Peter 1:6–7; 4:12), but God never tempts us to evil (James 1:13). God promises to limit the degree of trial we encounter (1 Cor. 10:13) and can rescue us from any trial (2 Peter 2:9). Although people can be the means of our trials (e.g., Matt. 16:1; Luke 10:25; Acts 20:19), Satan and his demons are the ultimate agents of evil whom Christians must stand firm against in any trial (Eph. 6:11–13); Satan is "the tempter" (Matt. 4:3), "the evil one" (Matt. 13:19), "the father of lies" (John 8:44), and "the deceiver of the whole world" (Rev. 12:9 NRSV). His strategy is to make us question God's promises and thus separate us from God (Matt. 4:1–11).

Although no explicit reference to Satan occurs in the Gethsemane episode, sufficient clues confirm his diabolical participation. During the Passion week Jesus' teaching included mention of the devil (Matt. 25:41). As He anticipated the cross and bearing the sin of the world, Jesus was troubled (John 12:27). Satan manipulated Judas into betraying Jesus (Luke 22:3; John 13:2). Jesus was troubled by Judas's willing participation (John 13:21; cf. John 6:70–71; Luke 22:48). At the Last Supper, Jesus announced that one disciple would betray Him, and then gave a morsel to Judas (John 13:26). The Gospel reports, "After the morsel, Satan then entered into him [Judas]. Therefore Jesus said to him, 'What you do, do quickly.'" (John 13:27 NASB).

Jesus had prayed for His disciples to be protected from Satan, especially for Peter. Note the plural reference in Jesus' warning of Satan's looming evil presence. "Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift all of you [Gk., 'umas,' "you all," pl.] as wheat. But I have prayed for you [Gk., *sou*, sg.] Simon, that your faith [sg.] may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers" (Luke 22:31–32). Nolland explains, "While Simon is addressed, it is clear that Satan has the whole band of disciples in view."[7] During His Farewell Discourse, Jesus said, "I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming.

He has no power over me, but I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father" (John 14:30–31 NRSV). In His final high priestly prayer, Jesus prayed for His disciples again, "I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one" (John 17:15 NASB). At His arrest following Gethsemane, Jesus acknowledged, "But this is your hour, and the power of darkness" (Luke 22:53 KJV). Nolland notes, "'Darkness,' 'power' (as used here), and 'Satan' (as used in [Luke] 22:3) are drawn together in Acts 26:18. . . . In this hour, designated in the purposes of God, the Satanic assault is permitted."[8] Thus, although Jesus knew this time of suffering was ordained by the Father, yet Jesus was also aware of Satan's culpable role in it.

With this temptation perspective in mind, Jesus challenges His prayerless disciples in Gethsemane, "Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation" (Matt. 26:41; Mark 14:38). In the New Testament, believers are commanded to "watch" (Gk., *grēgoreō*) regarding two particular situations, the most prominent relates to being ready, engaged in life, while awaiting the second coming of Jesus (Matt. 24:42–51; 1 Thess. 5:1–11). The other emphasis is to be alert to spiritual warfare (1 Peter 5:8), which is the particular focus of Jesus' charge here. Jesus' model prayer includes, "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one" (Matt. 6:13). Asking for God's help against Satan is required; we cannot do it in our own resources, as is emphasized in the second line of His teaching.

Spiritual Empowerment for Spiritual Warfare

Jesus continues, "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Matt. 26:41; Mark 14:38). A common understanding of this passage is portrayed in Eugene Peterson's rendering, "Part of you is eager, ready for anything in God; but another part is as lazy as an old dog sleeping by the fire" (Mark 14:38, *The Message*). So, Jesus seems to pat the sleeping heads of the disciples with compassion, and permits them to sleep on. But what if we understood that *pneuma* ("spirit") was not referring to the *human* spirit, but to the *Holy* Spirit, the source of divine enablement to defeat Satan? That offers a more fitting and potent translation, in light of the spiritual warfare context. Elsewhere, I have developed an extensive argument to support the claim that Jesus, the Second Person of the Trinity, lived His life on earth *predominantly* using His human capacities, relying for His supernatural enablement on the Father and the Spirit as the agent of the Father (e.g., Luke 4:1–2, 14; Acts 10:38).[9]

Since Jesus relied on the Holy Spirit as His typical pattern, we would expect Jesus to be sustained by the Spirit during this most difficult trial in Gethsemane. Then, in this brief charge, Jesus is revealing to these disciples the key supernatural resource for His own success, and for their potential success as well.

In this teaching, Jesus makes a contrast between relying on the divine ability of the Holy "Spirit," rather than solely relying on human resources ("flesh"), which can never stand alone against the assaults of Satan. To paraphrase Jesus' comment: *The Holy Spirit is ready to provide you help, if you only but ask, because you cannot defeat satanic temptation in your own human power.* On two other occasions, Jesus made similar contrasts between the divine sphere and human sphere (John 3:6; 6:63). Such a Spirit-flesh juxtaposition has an Old Testament precedent in Isaiah 31:3 contrasting an Egyptian alliance ("flesh") against relying on the Lord God ("Spirit"; see also Ps. 51:11–12), as is noted by Witherington. "The saying about the spirit being willing and the flesh weak in v. 38 refers not to the human spirit, but rather to the Holy Spirit, which is literally eager/ready (*prothymon*). This conclusion is supported by the OT texts to which Jesus here alludes—Isa. 31:3 and possibly Ps. 51:11–12."[10] Although Marcus interprets the word as "human spirit," nonetheless he adds, "It is doubtful, more over, whether Mark's Christian readers could have heard the sentence, 'the Spirit is willing but the flesh is weak,' without thinking of their own continuing battle with 'the flesh' and supported by the Holy Spirit (cf. Gal. 5:17)."[11]

Furthermore, of the seven times the terms "spirit" and "temptation" occur in the same Gospel context, two occur in Gethsemane (Matt. 26:41; Mark 14:38), and four relate to Jesus' earlier wilderness temptation in which the Holy Spirit was prominently active (Matt. 4:1; Mark 1:12–13; Luke 4:1–2, 13–14).[12] Clint Arnold notes, "The [wilderness] temptation narrative thus becomes an example of how to successfully resist solicitations to evil brought to us by Satan or demonic spirits. . . . [and] suggest[s] that the Spirit's presence and power were significant for Jesus resisting the Devil."[13] Jesus teaches, "If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" (Luke 11:13). Bock explains, "Since the prayer comes from a [believing] disciple, the request is for God's presence, guidance, and intimacy."[14]

In His Farewell Discourse, Jesus offered His disciples and today's believers' His most extensive teaching about the Holy Spirit, recorded in five passages

(John 14:16–17, 26; 15:26–27; 16:7–11, 12–15). Each identifies the Holy Spirit as the *paraclete*, sometimes translated as "advocate," yet Andreas Köstenberger proposes "helping presence" as a better way to capture Jesus' point.[15] The Holy Spirit is the divine agent of sanctification (John 7:38–39; Rom. 8:13). In sum, Jesus teaches His disciples, and us, that we need to watch and pray, being alert for spiritual warfare, and intentionally relying on Spirit empowerment to resist Satan to be able to stand firm in our faith.

A MODEL TO GUIDE OUR FORMATION BASED ON JESUS' EXAMPLE

With these contextual clues, we now examine more closely certain details of Jesus' experience to discern a pattern of actions that can be followed in facing trials.

Jesus Undergoes a Distress-Filled Moment in Gethsemane

Jesus arrives in the garden of Gethsemane with the disciples for His usual time of prayer (Luke 22:39), yet this time is different. Jesus "began to be very distressed and troubled. And He said to them, 'My soul is deeply grieved to the point of death; remain here and keep watch'" (Mark 14:33–34 NASB). Something has surprised Jesus (notice the word, "began," Matt. 26:37; Mark 14:33). The Gospel writers portray the encounter using five different Greek terms of deep emotion: *adēmoneō* ("troubled/distressed," Mark 14:33; Matt. 26:37), *agōnia* ("distressed / anguish," Luke 22:44), *ekthambeō* ("distressed," Mark 14:33), *lupeō* ("distressed/ grieved," Matt. 26:37), and *perilupos* ("deeply distressed/grieved," Mark 14:34; Matt. 26:38). Luke reports, "And being in anguish he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground" (Luke 22:44). Another record presents Jesus' trial this way, "In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to the one who was able to save him from death" (Heb. 5:7 NRSV).[16]

Jesus' experience in the garden of temptation and of a deeply troubled heart may offer great comfort to us. First, Jesus' human life affords us the insight that being tempted itself is not a sin. Second, by noting two facts—that Jesus did wrestle with such distress and Jesus never sinned (Heb. 4:15)—we can also infer that becoming distressed *is not, in itself, a sin;* it is a common human experience. Of course, it is imperative that we become alert to such distress for it signals us that we have entered a temptation zone. If we ignore this clue and give in to such

internal pressure—to yield to the temptation—then our initial distress can grow into debilitating sinful anxiety and excessive worry (Matt. 6:25–34). In Gethsemane, Jesus wrestles to stand firm against this distressful temptation.

The Gethsemane account includes matters requiring more extensive study that must be passed over due to space limits (e.g., the specific content of His prayer and the implicit temptation that prompted the prayer).[17] One comment worthy of note is that Jesus began His prayer, addressing the Father with the Aramaic *Abba*—the only record of this in the Gospels (Mark 14:36). By using *Abba*, Jesus introduced a new way of addressing God, conveying a deep relational intimacy, perhaps like our "Dad." The Gospel writers offer brief glimpses that Jesus' primary language was Aramaic (Mark 5:41; 7:34; 15:34; John 1:42). In his classic study, Joachim Jeremias concludes, "We have discovered that all five strata of the Gospel tradition report unanimously and without any hesitation that Jesus constantly addressed God as 'my Father' (with the exception of Mark 15.43 par. Matt. 27:46), and show that in so doing he used the Aramaic, *Abba*."[18] Thus, in the Gospels whenever we read Jesus saying "Father" (Gk., *pater*), we can infer Jesus was actually speaking the Aramaic *Abba*. Accordingly, the apostle Paul affirms that we too can pray to God with this same familial intimacy, "For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!'" (Rom. 8:15 NASB cf. Gal. 4:6).

Jesus' Reaction as a Model for Our Reactions

From the Mark 14:32–42 account, one can observe certain actions from Jesus' Gethsemane experience as He responds to this distressing satanic temptation. The Gospel writers include an extensive record for our benefit so that we too can learn from Jesus how to face trying times. I propose that Jesus offers us a fundamental four-fold framework to guide our own spiritual formation into Christlikeness, that applies to any of life's situations, whether distressful or not. I briefly identify the actions, offering a contemporary perspective to understand His actions.

When Jesus steps into the garden, He notices a disturbing dissonance within Him and shares His feelings with His disciples, with amazing frankness, "My soul is deeply grieved to the point of death" (Mark 14:34 NASB). Two practical steps can be inferred. First, Jesus became *aware* of a major change within His inner being that was not there on the way to the garden ("*began* to be very distressed and

troubled" Mark 14:33 NASB). Jesus then claims that those disturbing feelings He was experiencing *are His own* ("*my* soul is deeply grieved" Mark 14:34 NASB). To own and admit one's feelings is a step further beyond becoming aware of one's inner state.

Next, Jesus *requests* His three closest friends, Peter, James, and John (Mark 14:33) to "Remain here and keep watch" (Mark 14:34 NASB), implying He wants them to pray with Him and for Him ("Couldn't you men keep watch *with me* for one hour?" Matt. 26:40). Jesus then moves a little farther away and begins praying to His *Abba* for help. Jesus prays persistently for about an hour (Matt. 26:40) involving three periods in which He offers the same request to the Father ("Again He went away and prayed, saying the same words" Mark 14:39 NASB; on threefold prayer see Ps. 55:17; 2 Cor. 12:8). Following each prayer time, Jesus goes back to Peter, James, and John hopefully to be affirmed by their support ("And He came the third time and said to them, 'Are you still sleeping and resting?'" Mark 14:41).[19] Two more practical steps can be inferred. Third, Jesus asks for specific help, both from His human companions and from His divine *Abba*—He could not face such spiritual warfare alone. Repeated *action* steps to keep asking for divine and human help—three periods of persistent asking to the Father and three occasions of inquiry with His disciples—can imply a fourth step of repeated action.

I summarize this four-part pattern as: *Awake*, *Admit*, *Ask*, and *Act* (see Table A). I believe that Jesus' own practice offers an illuminating and powerfully effective pattern for us to follow, if we are ready to learn. Note that, although it can be a simple task to list these four fundamental steps, yet practicing each step is very difficult. Each step involves a more difficult choice than the preceding one. The simple point is that we cannot target any blind spots, gaps, or character issues for which we are unaware. We can easily spot the problems in others but can remain clueless about our own issues, as Jesus articulates, using humorous exaggeration, "Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' and behold, the log is in your own eye?" (Matt. 7:3–4 NASB). Without being awakened to our gap, we cannot make any movement forward. Yet, with increasing sensitivity, receptivity, and intentionality, many of our character issues can eventually get on to our radar screen. Once we become enlightened, then a choice must be made: Do we own the problem

or not? Unhelpful responses include: ignore it, deny it, adopt a victim mentality and blame others, or just medicate it without addressing any non-physical source of the issue.

Table A: A Four-Step Formation Process Illustrated by Jesus in Gethsemane

JESUS' WORDS AND ACTIONS		
***Re*-Active**	***AWAKE***	Jesus "began to be very distressed and troubled." *(Mark 14:33)*
	ADMIT	"My soul is deeply grieved to the point of death." *(Mark 14:34)*
***Pro*-Active**	***ASK***	"Remain here and keep watch." *(Mark 14:34 NASB)* "Abba, Father! All things are possible for You; remove this cup from Me; yet not what I will, but what You will." *(Mark 14:36)*
	ACT	"So, leaving them again, he went away and prayed [to the Father] for the third time, saying the same words again." *(Matt 26:44)* "And he came the third time and said to them, 'Are you still sleeping and resting? It is enough; the hour has come. The Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.'" *(Mark 14:41)*

If we decide to acknowledge the problem—what the Bible labels as "confession" (agreeing with God about the problem)—we are confronted with the next set of choices. Do we try to solve the problem in our own power, or with the help of others? In our culture, admitting a personal problem to others is embarrassing, so we tend to hide as Adam and Eve hid from God (Gen. 3:8–10). Furthermore, we highly value our independence and pulling ourselves up by our own bootstraps, as is reflected in this common married joke: A couple is driving to an event in an area new to them and they get lost. If the man is driving the car, he will tend to want to figure it out for himself, rather than ask a local for directions (been there, done that). Jesus' example encourages us to ask for both human and divine help. When we become distressed, we need not stay there. We can admit our distress and ask God for help, as Jesus did.[20] Finally, do we tend to make it a one-time ask? Just as with learning a new foreign language, a new sports skill, or

playing a musical instrument, so also in addressing a distressful situation or desiring to change a deep character problem, it will require intentionality and effort: practice, practice, practice.

Let us summarize each of the four steps from Jesus' example, incorporating additional points of explanation to offer a practical guide for today's disciples, as I have written elsewhere.[21]

Awake—We invite God the Holy Spirit and those we trust to help us to become aware and *wake up* to our formation gaps, to help us be present in the gap, being sensitive to the Spirit's movement within.

Admit—We do not hide or deny, but *admit* the gap with honesty and transparency. If the act is sinful, then we confess it to God and *accept* His forgiveness and peace. And we can continue to receive God's unconditional love for us—just as we are, gaps and all.

Ask—We *ask* the Holy Spirit for formation grace to be empowered to live beyond our human ability as Jesus did, being bathed in God's love and anchored in truth, so we can address our gaps. On the human plane, with close Christian friends, family, and church small groups at our side, we can feel safe to share our journey about our gaps and invite their help.

Act—We plan, with purpose and effort, to take some realistic initial steps to address our gaps on a more permanent basis, slowly chipping away at them, as we follow Jesus' example and relying on God's empowering grace.

Jesus teaches that the root of our formation requires changing the heart. "The good person out of the good treasure of the heart produces good, and the evil person out of evil treasure produces evil; for it is out of the abundance of the heart that the mouth speaks" (Luke 6:45 NRSV). To glean more insights from Jesus' model, consider further synthesis of these four steps into two broad categories, proactive and reactive. The final two steps of "ask" and "act" involve the *pro-active* element of deciding to participate in relevant formation practices (e.g., solitude, Bible meditation, driving in the slow lane) that can indirectly change one's character over time.

The first two steps of "awake" and "admit" are more challenging, in that we must become awakened to our blind spots, in which the Holy Spirit has an important role, if we are prepared to listen. These two steps involve a *re-active* component of formation. I have become convinced that attending to our reactions, as

Jesus did, is a critical component for character formation.[22] Our reactions can uniquely inform us of the inner state of our soul. Listening to feedback from trusted others is another essential avenue. Attending to our reactions offers an opportunity for reflection and to begin a movement through this four-step formation process, modeled by Jesus. Thus, there is an "active" aspect of both components, pro-active and re-active, summarized in the concept of intentionality. Character formation requires our intentionality.

A FINAL WORD: A THEOLOGICAL HINDRANCE TO TAKING THE FIRST STEP

Jesus' distressing emotions in Gethsemane have been an interpretative problem for a greater part of Church history, while the topic of emotions continues to be often marginalized, ignored or even censured in the Church today. According to Kevin Madigan, "It was a plague and embarrassment to patristic and medieval interpreters," particularly due to the theological (mis)understanding at that time that God was impassible—that God could not experience any emotions.[23] Jesus wept (John 11:35), yet we tend to apologize about our tears. Jesus experienced frustration and could freely vent His frustration (Matt. 16:6–11; Mark 9:19), yet we tend to judge that as unworthy. Jesus could freely share His inner turbulence with His friends (Mark 14:34), yet we tend to be embarrassed, keeping them to ourselves and get busy in order to be distracted and suppress our feelings. In his book-length treatment of *Faithful Feelings*, New Testament scholar Matthew Elliot claims that "as a man, [Jesus] set an example for the emotions of the Christian. As God, Jesus shows us the emotions of the creator. . . . if Jesus was one with the Father this is also good evidence for the emotional nature of God himself (John 10:30; 14:9)."[24]

Although contemporary theology has revised the doctrine of God's full impassibility, we continue to hold to the negative implications from the earlier view that there is little place for a robust emotional life for Christians. According to Elliott, "The [published] theologies of the New Testament, as we have seen, do not do a good job in incorporating emotion into their framework. As it is in secular ethics, in New Testament ethics and theology, emotion is often belittled, trivialized, or ignored."[25]

To make a way forward, we need to reconsider our ways by looking back again,

"fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart." (Heb. 12:2–3 NASB)[26]

*An earlier version of a few ideas included in this chapter appeared in my *Living into the Life of Jesus* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2012).

Notes

1. Joseph Kotva, *The Christian Case for Virtue Ethics* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University, 1996), 79, 89.
2. Linda Zagzebski, "The Incarnation and Virtue Ethics," *The Incarnation*, eds. Stephen T. Davis, Daniel Kendall, and Gerald O'Collins (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 329.
3. "The actual life and teachings of Jesus have not been central." Jonathan Pennington, *Reading the Gospels Wisely* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2012), 233; he also claims that the Gospels should be considered as "the archway" of biblical studies, 229. Also see Glen Stassen and David Gushee, *Kingdom Ethics* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003) and Daniel J. Harrington S. J. and James F. Keenan S. J., *Jesus and Virtue Ethics* (Lanham, MD: Sheed & Ward, 2002).
4. J. P. Moreland, *Kingdom Triangle* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan 2007), 144.
5. Ibid., 196.
6. W. Schneider and C. Brown, "Tempt, Test, Approve," *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, ed. Colin Brown (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1978), 3: 798.
7. John Nolland, *Luke 18:35–24:53* (Dallas, TX: Word, 1993), 1072.
8. Ibid., 1089.
9. For further study of Jesus' human example, see my "Jesus' Example: Prototype of the Dependent, Spirit-filled Life," *Jesus in Trinitarian Perspective*, eds. Fred Sanders and Klaus Issler (Nashville: B&H, 2007), 189–225; "Learning from Jesus to Live in the Manner Jesus Would if He Were I: Biblical Grounding for Willard's Proposal Regarding Jesus' Humanity," *Journal of Spiritual Formation and Soul Care*, 3:2 (Fall 2010): 155–80, and *Living into the Life of Jesus* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2012), chap. 5, 107–34.
10. Ben Witherington, *The Gospel of Mark* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2001), 380.
11. Joel Marcus, *Mark 8–16*, Anchor Bible (New Haven, CT: Yale University, 2009), 980.
12. The seventh occurrence of "spirit" and "temptation" appearing together is in Mark 8:11–12 NRSV, in which Jesus "sighed deeply in his spirit."
13. Clint Arnold, "The Kingdom, Miracles, Satan, and Demons," *The Kingdom of God*, eds. Christopher W. Morgan and Robert A. Peterson (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 167.
14. Darrell Bock, *Luke 9:51–24:53* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1996), 1062–63.
15. Andreas Köstenberger, *John* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2004), 436n70.

16. For a list of some commentators affirming that Hebrews 5:7 includes a reference to Gethsemane, see George H. Guthrie, *Hebrews* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1998), 190n9.
17. For further study, consult recent commentaries on these passages. I think Craig Blaising's article offers a promising avenue for an alternative interpretation that presents Jesus' prayer as one of faith that was actually answered, which Hebrews 5:7 also claims "and [Jesus] was heard because of his reverent submission." See "Gethsemane: A Prayer of Faith, *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, 22:4 (December 1979): 333–43.
18. Joachim Jeremias, *The Prayers of Jesus* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1967), 57.
19. First Peter 5:6–10 could be regarded as Peter's meditation on Jesus' triumph in Gethsemane and his own tragedy; note the overlapping themes with Gethsemane as developed in this chapter.
20. J. P. Moreland honestly shares a time of his own deep depression in J. P. Moreland and Klaus Issler, *The Lost Virtue of Happiness* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2006), chap. 7, "Defeating Two Hardships of Life: Anxiety and Depression."
21. Klaus Issler, *Living into the Life of Jesus*, 55.
22. I provide more details regarding the formation implications of indirect doxastic voluntarism in, "Inner Core Belief Formation, Spiritual Practices, and the Willing Doing Gap," *Journal of Spiritual Formation and Soul Care*, 2 (Fall 2009): 179–98.
23. Kevin Madigan, "Ancient and High-Medieval Interpretations of Jesus in Gethsemane: Some Reflections on Tradition and Continuity in Christian Thought," *Harvard Theological Review*, 88 (1995): 157.
24. Matthew A. Elliott, *Faithful Feelings* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 2006), 205–6.
25. Ibid., 256. In addition to Elliot's resource, for further study on the emotional life from a Christian perspective, see Robert C. Roberts, *Spiritual Emotions* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2007), B. B. Warfield, "On the Emotional Life of Our Lord," *The Person and Work of Christ*, ed. S. G. Craig (Philadelphia: P&R, 1970), 93–145.
26. For discussion of a larger framework of five "formation gaps or barriers" in which Jesus' distress-filled Gethsemane encounter depicts the "Distressed Gap," see chap. 2 in my *Living into the Life of Jesus* and "Five Key Barriers to Deep Learning and Character Formation Based Primarily on Jesus' Parable of the Four Soils," *Christian Education Journal*, *Supplemental Issue*, (Spring 2012): S–138–156.

"How Then Shall We Live?"

Virtue, Happiness, *and the* Renovation *of the* Soul

MICHAEL W. AUSTIN

I came that they might have life and have it abundantly.
JOHN 10:10 NASB

If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.
MATTHEW 16:24–25 NASB

IN PLATO'S MASTERPIECE, the *Republic*, Socrates engages others in a discussion of whether the just live better and happier lives than the unjust, and claims that "the argument concerns no ordinary topic, but the way we ought to live."[1] A significant part of the philosophical case given by Socrates for the conclusion that it is better to be just than unjust, or as we might put it, to be a person of good character rather than one of bad character, is a certain understanding of human nature. For Socrates in the *Republic*, a central reason that we are to be good is that this is appropriate to our nature. Human beings are constituted in part by an immaterial soul, and the structure of the soul has important implications for how we are to live. For Socrates, a truly harmonious soul is a just soul. A good person will flourish, because they embody and express the virtues. In fact, Socrates argues that in order to be truly happy, we must be virtuous.

Similar convictions are present in the works of J. P. Moreland that address human nature and its connections with ethics. For J. P., as for Socrates, metaphysics and morality are deeply interrelated. J. P.'s writings on ethics flow from the conviction that ethics must be grounded in sound biblical, theological, philosophical, and psychological truths. Morality is not subjective, it is not a matter of personal preference. Rather, morality is part of the objective order of reality. When we think and live properly we conform our lives to morality, rather than seeking to shape morality according to our personal preferences.

In the introduction to *Body and Soul: Human Nature and the Crisis in Ethics*, J. P. and coauthor Scott Rae state, "It has always been a part of our nature to be curious about what we are, where we are going and how we ought to be treated."[2] In this chapter, I will explore and expand upon J. P.'s answers to these perennial human concerns in his development of a Christian view of how we ought to live.

HAPPINESS AND THE EMPTY SELF

Before we consider a Christian perspective concerning how to live as it has been articulated by J. P., we must first consider the cultural factors which tend to undermine our quest for true happiness. That is, prior to understanding the solution, it will be helpful to more fully understand the problem. Perhaps the most fundamental aspect of the problem is our misunderstanding of the nature of happiness itself.[3]

We are confused about the nature of happiness. As J. P. points out, the contemporary quest for happiness is based upon a misunderstanding of what happiness truly is, a misunderstanding that has only come about in the past one hundred years or so but that has had a destructive influence on people's lives. For most people, the contemporary understanding of happiness is that it is a pleasant feeling, grounded in getting what one wants. Our goal for ourselves and our children is to have consistent feelings of pleasant satisfaction that arise when life goes the way we think it should, for us. There is nothing wrong, in and of itself, with pleasure. Still, according to J. P., there are two main problems that arise when happiness is understood in terms of pleasure satisfaction. First, it is sharply distinct from a superior classical understanding of happiness. Second, if we seek happiness in the contemporary sense, we will fail to obtain it. Let's consider these problems in turn.

First, since the contemporary conception of happiness as pleasurable satis-

faction has replaced the classical conception of happiness, it will be helpful to consider these rivals in more depth. We are intimately familiar with the contemporary understanding of happiness. This view is ubiquitous in contemporary culture, once we begin to attend to its presence. Advertisers depend upon it to move us to purchase their products, and it is articulated and assumed in much of the entertainment media of our day. On the contemporary understanding, happiness is an intense feeling, in the way that feelings of rage, exuberance, and horror are intense. It is a type of natural high, so to speak, and as such it can be addictive as we seek it via new experiences and relationships. It is also the case that, like these other intense feelings, happiness is fleeting. It is transitory and unstable, not only because of its similarities with other intense feelings, but also because it is dependent upon external circumstances. We believe that in order to be happy we must have the right job, the right spouse, and the right house. We seek to engineer these circumstances in our relationships, including romantic relationships, friendships, and even the parent-child relationship. We do the same thing in our careers. When a job fails to deliver the emotional goods, we long for and sometimes seek greener pastures elsewhere, perhaps several times over. When our relationships, careers, or financial lives do not measure up, we are not happy. Why would we be, on this contemporary understanding, when in such situations we are not getting what we want? The misguided strategies we employ in our quest for happiness as pleasant satisfaction lead us to the second problem alluded to above.

The second problem for us, if we seek happiness in the contemporary sense, is that we cannot obtain it. In order to understand why, consider the notion of *the empty self*, a concept from contemporary psychology employed by J. P. in his diagnosis of our misguided strategies for obtaining happiness. The empty self is the fruit of understanding happiness to be feelings of pleasant satisfaction and making it, so understood, our primary and long-term goal in life.[4]

The empty self is individualistic, infantile, narcissistic, and passive. First, the empty self is overly individualistic. The goals, interests, and values of the empty self are adopted without concern for the community. Rather, such a person thinks of his life as a self-contained atom, where meaning is found from within, primarily from whatever brings feelings of pleasant satisfaction. This individualistic concern shapes the identity and motivates the actions of the empty self. The empty self is also infantile, insofar as it deeply needs soothing, comfort,

and instant gratification. These are sought in relationships, religious activities, food, drink, sex, exercise, and a host of other things. Pain, hard work, and endurance are to be avoided. Better to be amused than bored or delay gratification. That which drives such a person is *feeling*, rather than *thought*. The empty self is also narcissistic; it is obsessed with itself and whatever it perceives as in its own self-interest. This perceived self-interest trumps all other considerations, including the interests and welfare of others. The narcissist uses manipulative tactics in order to exalt the self, and will attempt to exploit others, including God, to accomplish this. This focus on the self prevents the formation of deep, honest, and trusting relationships with others. While the narcissistic empty self may seek to give the appearance of such traits in his relationships, this will not be authentic. Finally, the empty self is passive. J. P. takes the couch potato to be an exemplar of this aspect of the empty self. As he puts it, "We let other people do our living and thinking for us: The pastor studies the Bible for us, the news media does our political thinking for us, and we let our favorite sports team exercise, struggle, and win for us. From watching television to listening to sermons, our primary agenda is to be amused and entertained."[5] The result of this is not only that we are less active, we are less proactive. We allow life to happen to us, rather than seeking to make things happen. One result of this is an increase in depression, which, according to the psychology that J. P. draws from, is for many the result of living for the self, rather than for a cause larger than the self. The upshot is that the empty self is not only empty, but fails to acquire that for which it so desperately longs, pleasure.

The contemporary understanding of happiness, then, fails in numerous ways. It fails to move one to cultivate character, it fails to get one to look beyond the self in any meaningful way other than to gain personal satisfaction, and it simply does not work. The initial part of J. P.'s solution is his claim that we must return to a classic understanding of happiness, the one articulated by both Christian and non-Christian thinkers alike, including Plato, Aristotle, Moses, Solomon, Jesus, Augustine, Aquinas, and many others. Happiness, on this understanding, is just a life of moral and intellectual virtue. It consists primarily in good character and in engaging in rational self-denial for the sake of the well-being of others. This way of understanding happiness includes a deep sense of well-being, of human flourishing, of true righteousness, grounded in such character traits as wisdom, kindness, and compassion. Rather than an intense feeling, the phenomenological texture of this form of happiness is more like a settled tone, a background

mood that is the product of being good. Such an individual will also have times of intense feeling, both positive and negative, but such feelings are neither the main goal of life nor the main thing to avoid, respectively. The classic notion of happiness also springs from within the person, and therefore is not dependent upon external circumstances. This is what in part enables such an individual to persevere through trials and difficulties: her character and overall well-being are connected in deep ways with important aspects of reality, truth, beauty, goodness, and for the follower of Christ, God. The individual who is happy in the classical sense is liberated from the need to have feelings of pleasurable satisfaction, though she will be grateful when they arise, and is free to live for a cause larger than the self. She values her relationship with God, playing her part in advancing His kingdom, and reflecting His character to others. The goodness of her character is at the center of her being, and this colors the rest of her life in positive ways. In short, for J. P., the happy Christian is not the one who gets what he wants from God. Instead, the happy Christian is the disciple, one who studies the way of Jesus and seeks to put it into practice in community with other like-minded followers of Christ. As he puts it, "The path of discipleship and the life of an empty self mix like oil and water."[6]

How Then Shall We Live?

In much of contemporary philosophy having to do with ethics and the good life, moral philosophers are content to diagnose, analyze, criticize, and construct ethical theories and offer arguments for and against the morality of issues in personal and social ethics. J. P., however, goes beyond this and offers specific and practical teachings intended to help others not only *understand* the good life, but also to grow in *being* good. In this way, too, he stands in the tradition of those philosophers who see philosophy as more than an intellectual activity. Aristotle famously says in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, that "our present discussion does not aim, as our others do, at study; for the purpose of our examination is not to know what virtue is, but to become good."[7] The intellectual aspect is of course important and even foundational in many ways, but if our understanding of virtue and character is never applied to everyday life, then we have made a grave mistake. It is this sort of concrete application that much of J. P.'s work on discipleship contains.

First, in his writings and teaching, J. P. emphasizes that a crucial way in which we make progress as disciples of Christ who seek to become more like Him is by

consistently engaging in the spiritual disciplines.[8] A spiritual discipline, for the Christian, "is a repeated bodily practice done in dependence on the Holy Spirit and under the direction of Jesus and other wise teachers in His Way, to enable us to get good at certain things in life that we cannot learn to do by direct effort."[9] The disciplines include such practices as fasting, study, silence, solitude, frugality, worship, prayer, and meditation.

Consider the countercultural disciplines of solitude and silence and how J. P. advises us to incorporate them into our daily lives. Being alone and being quiet enables us to connect with ourselves and, more importantly, with God Himself so that we can then engage others in more loving and authentic ways. But how can we find solitude and silence in an age saturated with entertainment, advertising, busyness, and the constant chatter of social media? Apart from unplugging, I think there are other things we can do, which J. P. exhorts us to try. First, we can simply schedule time for solitude into our week. He encourages us to take an hour, two or three times a week, to be alone. This might involve going to a particular room in the house, taking a walk, or even going for a drive (with the radio off). When done consistently, this can have a positive impact on our overall welfare, and deepen our relationship with God. Solitude and silence can be practiced in the cathedral of the car; given that so many of us spend significant amounts of time in our cars, we can make use of it by turning off the radio and cell phone in order to be alone and quiet in God's presence. Finally, J. P. advises that we make room for a retreat, once or twice a year, in which we get away for a day or two to enjoy solitude, silence, and incorporate other disciplines like journaling, study, prayer, and singing. All of this will help us to connect in deep ways with God, others, and ourselves, and will foster the classical conception of happiness so central to the life of the follower of Christ.

As J. P. points out, we often neglect to apply what we know about how to improve at something to the moral and spiritual realms of life. This is another way in which the disciplines come into play. If I want to become a better soccer player, I must practice. For instance, if I want to cultivate my ball control skills, I can practice juggling the ball using different surfaces of the body. While one will rarely juggle the ball in a game, the skills developed as one practices in this way are transferable and in the end help to make one a better player in game situations. Similarly, we don't engage in the spiritual disciplines in order to get good at the disciplines themselves. Rather, we engage in them to get good at life. For

example, the point of fasting is not to become proficient at going without food. Rather, it is to engage in a practice which cultivates the skill of self-denial that can then be employed in other realms of life where we are currently unable to exhibit it. Or consider a person who struggles with anger, an emotion, according to J. P., which in certain ways is present in the stomach. This person might engage in fasting in order to gain control over the feelings of hunger, which reside in the stomach, thereby targeting this area of the body and practicing a discipline that will foster self-control and spiritual growth. The point of the disciplines is not merely such self-improvement, of course, as intimacy with God and others as well as service of God's kingdom are essential aspects of the good life, but this sort of moral and spiritual transformation is one important element in the life of the follower of Christ. In fact, Jesus Himself practiced many spiritual disciplines, which only underscores the need for them in our own lives (Mark 1:35; Luke 4:42).

Second, the acquisition and application of religious and moral knowledge play an indispensable role in the Christian life. For J. P., "it is crucial that the church recover her confidence that she is in possession of *spiritual and ethical knowledge* in Holy Scripture primarily, but also in the history of her thought about God, moral issues, the spiritual life, and other important topics."[10] J. P. emphasizes here and elsewhere that the history of Christian thought, as well as the contributions of contemporary Christian thinkers, is a knowledge tradition that takes there to be a moral and spiritual reality, regardless of what humans believe. Just as the statement "2+2=4" is true, independent of what humans believe about it, so it is also true that "God exists" and "Compassion is a virtue," regardless of whether any particular person or community agrees with these statements. In order to flourish, we need to know how we can flourish as human beings, how to cultivate the virtues, and how to make progress in our spiritual formation in Christ. It must be emphasized, as J. P. does, that the answers that the Scriptures and Christian thinkers give to such questions are not mere deliverances of a fideistic tradition, but rather they are reflections of the way things are. That is, they constitute knowledge. And knowledge of moral and spiritual truth helps to enable individuals and communities to truly flourish. We will return to this issue below, in a discussion of the pursuit of moral and spiritual knowledge.

Third, not only in his writings, but in his teaching and in my own personal interaction with him over the years, J. P. has consistently stressed the importance of deep friendships.[11] He takes Aristotle as his starting point for discussing the value

of friendship for followers of Christ. Aristotle describes three types of friendship, based on usefulness, pleasure, and virtue. The first two are limited, and sometimes even defective. These types of relationships are based on what each party can get out of the friendship, either some advantage or pleasure, whereas the third type is based on something more secure and meaningful. Friendship based on virtue is exemplified in a relationship where the friends have a common vision of the good life, a shared view of virtue and human flourishing. In this form of friendship, a central aim of the relationship is for the friends to help one another in their pursuit of goodness, virtue, and a flourishing life. For J. P., what Aristotle was looking for was koinonia, the fellowship that obtains within the body of Christ. Such fellowship may be useful and pleasant, but it will have a larger aim, namely, mutual encouragement with respect to the mission of knowing and loving God and advancing His kingdom of love, justice, and peace. The importance of such relationships as they relate to our daily lives and the mission of the church is often underappreciated in our individualistic culture.

In his many writings, J. P. of course has more to say about virtue, happiness, and the renovation of the soul. I have not given a comprehensive summary of his ideas on these topics. Instead, I have discussed some of the more central ideas that are present across many of his works. In the rest of this chapter, I will extend his views in ways that I hope will be useful for those pursuing a life of discipleship under Christ.

Extending J. P.'s Views: The Pursuit of Moral and Spiritual Knowledge

I agree with much of what J. P. has to say about both the loss of moral and spiritual knowledge in our culture, its negative effects, and of the need for the church to do its part in helping to recover it. One way to see how this might work is to consider the three different types of knowledge,[12] and their relevance for the life of discipleship.

The first kind of knowledge is *knowledge by acquaintance*. Such knowledge is direct. It can occur when I see a soccer ball in my field of vision. I am directly aware of the ball, and even if I don't know what it is, I can have this form of knowledge with respect to the features of the ball, its presence before me, and so on. My direct awareness of an inner feeling, such as contentment or anxiety, is another example of knowledge by acquaintance. The second form of knowledge is *propositional knowledge*. When I have this kind of knowledge, I believe that

some claim is true based on adequate evidence. For instance, I might know that the proposition "God exists" is true based on particular religious experiences and sound apologetic arguments. The third kind of knowledge is *know-how*, or practical knowledge. An expert electrician has this kind of knowledge with respect to his craft; he is skilled at a variety of tasks related to this field.

It will be helpful to consider these kinds of knowledge in relation to our quest for moral and spiritual knowledge. As followers of Christ, we can have direct access to *the* moral, intellectual, and spiritual exemplar, Jesus Christ. As we interact with Him in our practices of the spiritual disciplines, and in simply setting Him before our minds throughout the day (Ps. 16:8), we can acquire knowledge by acquaintance of Christ Himself, which essentially includes His character. Via our relationship with Christ, we can be directly acquainted with such virtues as humility, compassion, courage, and patience. We can also be directly acquainted with a person who exemplifies all of the virtues, and of a flourishing life of dependence upon God. Seeking this type of knowledge is especially important to consider for those who have deep interests in apologetics, theology, and philosophy. The reason for this is that we often tend to focus on these topics as subjects to be studied, and neglect to appreciate that a personal being is at the heart of Christianity, rather than an argument, concept, or system. These are all important, of course, but they must be studied in the context of a deep and growing relationship with God as a subject, that is, as a person, and not as a mere object of study. Friendship is relevant to knowledge by acquaintance, as through deep relationships with other followers of Christ—*koinonia*—we can also acquire knowledge by acquaintance of the virtues as they are exemplified in our era, and what it might be to flourish in our context.

Much of apologetics, philosophy, and theology focuses on propositional knowledge, and rightly so. A positive feature of J. P.'s work on human flourishing is that in it he draws from other fields of study such as psychology. His work exemplifies the belief that *all truth is God's truth*. I believe there are relatively untapped resources in the discipline of psychology not only for human flourishing in the kingdom of God, but also related to apologetic arguments.

First, sound psychology has much to say that is relevant to human flourishing, as we've seen in J. P.'s analysis of the empty self. What I have in mind goes beyond what might be thought of as the typical Christian self-help book. Such works have their place, but untapped resources remain. For instance, consider

the work of contemporary psychologist Roy Baumeister on willpower.[13] According to Baumeister and others working on this issue, the virtue of self-control can be developed. We can cultivate it in ways that are similar to how we develop and strengthen a muscle. In order to strengthen a muscle, one must exercise it. Initially, this brings on fatigue, but over time the muscle becomes stronger. There is something analogous that occurs with respect to self-control. When we engage in some activity that requires self-control, such as a sport or physical exercise (and I would add here many of the classical spiritual disciplines), over time we develop increased stamina with respect to this character trait. This confirms what J. P. says about the nature and value of the spiritual disciplines. It is plausible to think that fasting, for instance, will have these sorts of results with respect to self-control. Such traits are fruits of the Spirit, to be sure, but we can cooperate with the work of the Spirit by opening up our lives to God via the disciplines. In fact, we may even extend our understanding of a spiritual discipline, along the lines of J. P.'s definition noted above, where a spiritual discipline "is a repeated bodily practice done in dependence on the Holy Spirit and under the direction of Jesus and other wise teachers in His Way, to enable us to get good at certain things in life that we cannot learn to do by direct effort." We may engage in sports as a spiritual discipline, for example, and expect to see our participation in them not only reveal our character, but foster moral growth as well.[14]

The apologist may also make use of psychological data to bolster arguments given in defense of the rationality of the Christian worldview, as J. P. does with his analysis and proposed solution to the problem of the empty self. For example, philosophers both past and present have expressed skepticism about the claim that humility is a virtue. Given the central role of humility in a Christian understanding of how we ought to live, such skeptical challenges must be met. One way to do this is to draw from the psychological evidence that is relevant to this issue. For instance, humility is linked with generous behavior, excellence in leadership, and pro-social traits such as gratitude, forgiveness, and cooperation.[15] This provides evidence in support of the claim that it is a virtue and conducive to human flourishing. Knowledge and communication of such truths which support a Christian conception of human flourishing will help strengthen the cumulative case that can be given in favor of the Christian worldview.

Finally, consider the third form of knowledge, *know-how*. The above lessons concerning propositional knowledge about self-control are relevant here. One

can cultivate the skill of self-control via the practice of the spiritual disciplines, and put that know-how to work in relationships, such as marriage, friendship, and parenthood—and also in other realms where self-control is needed. As we grow in direct knowledge of Christ and other followers of His Way, as we acquire propositional knowledge about the nature and value of Christian morality and spirituality, it is essential that we take the final step of putting that knowledge into practice. Then we can more fully understand what life in Christ is to be, and more fully exemplify it for the sake of God, other people, and His kingdom.

An Apologetic of Character

In conclusion, J. P. has been and is an influential philosopher and apologist, offering arguments for God's existence that are accessible, and others that are cutting-edge scholarship. But the vision he casts is not merely one of intellectual engagement. It includes this, of course, but goes beyond it as well. J. P.'s focus on happiness, human flourishing, the spiritual disciplines, and the quest for moral and spiritual knowledge form the basis of an apologetic of character. That is, those who follow the Way of Jesus themselves become evidence for the reality of God in Christ. And J. P. reminds us that although we benefit from obedience to Christ, we do not seek virtue and Christlikeness only for ourselves. Our pursuit of these goods is caught up in a greater vision, our final end of shalom, which not only includes the inner harmony characteristic of true human flourishing, but also harmony with God, other humans, and the rest of creation.[16] This is the vision of the kingdom of God, the culmination of the redemptive work of Christ. It is a vision worth living for; it is where the life that Christ came to give us can be realized.

Notes

1. Plato, *Republic*, trans. by C.D.C. Reeve (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, 2004), 32, 352d.
2. J. P. Moreland and Scott Rae, *Body and Soul: Human Nature and the Crisis in Ethics* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 7.
3. The discussion in this section is drawn from J. P. Moreland and Klaus Issler, *The Lost Virtue of Happiness* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2006), chap. 1.
4. For more on the concept of the empty self, see J. P. Moreland, *Love Your God with All Your Mind* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1997), chap. 4.
5. Moreland and Issler, *The Lost Virtue of Happiness*, 21.

6. J. P. Moreland, *Kingdom Triangle* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007), 25.
7. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 2nd ed., trans. by Terence Irwin (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, 1999), 19, 1103b 27.
8. Moreland and Issler, *The Lost Virtue of Happiness*, chap. 2.
9. Moreland and Issler, *The Lost Virtue of Happiness*, 46.
10. Moreland, *Kingdom Triangle*, 114.
11. Moreland, *Love Your God with All Your Mind*, 170–72. See also Moreland and Issler, *The Lost Virtue of Happiness*, chap. 8.
12. The three types are given a general characterization in Moreland, *Kingdom Triangle*, 120–30.
13. For an accessible overview of his research, see Roy Baumeister and John Tierney, *Willpower: Rediscovering the Greatest Human Strength* (New York: Penguin, 2011). The studies supporting the claims that follow include M. Muraven, R. Baumeister, and D. Tice, "Longitudinal Improvement of Self-Regulation through Practice: Building Self-Control Strength through Repeated Exercise," *The Journal of Social Psychology* 139 (1999): 446–57; and M. Oaten and K. Cheng, "Longitudinal Gains in Self-Regulation from Regular Physical Exercise," *British Journal of Health Psychology* 11 (2006): 717–33.
14. For more on this approach to sports, see my "Sports as Exercises in Spiritual Formation," *Journal of Spiritual Formation and Soul Care* 3 (2010): 66–78.
15. Julie Exline and Peter Hill, "Humility: A Consistent and Robust Predictor of Generosity," *The Journal of Positive Psychology* 7 (2012): 208–18; Jim Collins, "Level 5 Leadership: The Triumph of Humility and Fierce Resolve," *Harvard Business Review* 79 (2001): 66–76; J. A. Morris, C. M. Brotheridge, and J. C. Urbanski, "Bringing Humility to Leadership: Antecedents and Consequences of Leader Humility," *Human Relations* 58 (2005):1323–50. For a fuller discussion of these issues and a philosophical defense of humility, see my "Defending Humility: A Philosophical Sketch with Replies to Tara Smith and David Hume," *Philosophia Christi* 14 (2012): 461–70.
16. For more on shalom, see David H. Stern, *Jewish New Testament Commentary* (Clarksville, MD: Jewish New Testament Publications, 1992), 39, 107, 200–201, 328, 440. For a treatment of several individual Christian virtues, including advice on how to cultivate them, see Michael W. Austin and R. Douglas Geivett, eds., *Being Good: Christian Virtues for Everyday Life* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2012).

The Witness *of the* Church

MIKE ERRE

AS A WELL-REGARDED PHILOSOPHER and apologist, it would be understandable if J. P. Moreland chose to invest his great mind and passion in a manner inaccessible to ordinary Christian men and women. But such is not the case. Much of his work has been directed at assisting the Church to live well and wisely for the sake of Jesus (*Love Your God with All Your Mind*, *In Search of a Confident Faith*, *Lost Virtue of Happiness*, and, most importantly in my opinion, *Kingdom Triangle*). Perhaps that is why this chapter is one of the most important and more surprising to be included in this book.

J. P.'s most significant book for the church, *Kingdom Triangle*, will be the focus of my discussion. In it, he brings together three strands of Christian theology and tradition to knit together a picture of holistic Christian spirituality that is much needed to meet today's challenges. Those challenges include the rival worldviews of scientific naturalism (the view that all of reality is material and science is the only authority we have to give us knowledge of reality), and postmodernism (a diverse collection of ideas that hold that knowledge, reality, truth, value, and meaning are socially constructed and thus culturally relative). At the core of both worldviews is a view of knowledge and reality that is antithetical to the heart of the Christian message: there is no nonempirical knowledge and no objective immaterial world. In other words, on these accounts, Christianity belongs to the realm of faith (read: subjectivity, irrationality), not the realm of knowledge. Moreover, if reality only consists in what can be empirically verified, then the Christian

notions of God, soul, heaven, sin, and many others, have no basis in reality.

The categories and implications of these rival worldviews are displayed and advocated in our schools and universities, through our media and entertainment and form the often subconscious web of ideas through which most of us filter human life. J. P. outlines them in great detail and then offers the reader something he calls the Kingdom Triangle, "the essential ingredients for the maturation of the Evangelical community and the profundity of its presence in the general culture."[1] The three sides of the triangle are the recovery of the Christian mind, the renovation of the soul through spiritual formation, and the restoration of the power and presence of the Holy Spirit at the center of Christian life. We'll examine each in turn and consider the implications of each for the Church.

THE CULTIVATION OF THE CHRISTIAN MIND

It will come as no surprise that, as a philosopher, J. P. begins by pointing out the rich legacy of Christian scholarship found throughout Church history. The earliest Christians valued the life of the mind as Jesus himself commanded:

> Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments." (Matt. 22:37–40)

The early Church was especially vigorous in its intellectual defense of Jesus as the Christ, or Messiah. Instructive here is the example of Paul from Acts 17:

> When Paul and his companions had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a Jewish synagogue. As was his custom, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he *reasoned* with them from the Scriptures, *explaining* and *proving* that the Messiah had to suffer and rise from the dead. "This Jesus I am proclaiming to you is the Messiah," he said. Some of the Jews were *persuaded* and joined Paul and Silas, as did a large number of God-fearing Greeks and quite a few prominent women. (Acts 17:1–4, emphasis added)

The earliest followers of Jesus were not afraid to meet both Jews and Greeks on their own turf and engage them in sophisticated arguments from reason, the Hebrew Bible (what Christians call the Old Testament), or from Greek philosophy. In fact, later in Acts 17, Paul engages the leading thinkers of Athens by quot-

ing Greek poets and philosophers in arguing against the emptiness of idols and for the lordship of Jesus over all the world. Paul was not afraid to give evidence and to reason with his opponents. He refused to withdraw from the pagan culture around him and instead engaged them on their own terms. Many have since followed Paul's example, as these illustrations could be multiplied throughout Church history.

J. P. rightly sees that the Christian Scriptures are a source of *knowledge* on the matters they speak to. In other words, because the Scriptures are the product of the inspiration of God's Spirit, we can trust them to convey to us the knowledge of how things really are. On this view, Christianity does not stand *opposed* to knowledge, but is instead a source of it.

This is why the cultivation of an informed Christian mind is crucial. The Scriptures are more than simply a collection of good advice, nice moral teaching, or motivational quotes and stories. The Bible records for us the truth about God, humanity, and the whole world. It is through this filter that followers of Christ are called to see the world. They are to put on the mind of Christ (see e.g., Rom. 12:1–2; 1 Cor. 2:16). This requires more of us than Bible memory or sitting in church each week listening to sermons. To be sure, those are good things, but the cultivation of a Christian mind goes beyond them.

The Christian mind is formed by immersion in the Scriptures, but it is also cultivated by learning to think clearly about what we believe and why we believe it. Certainly, a true belief (i.e., one that corresponds to and represents reality) is better than a false one, even if someone doesn't have good reasons for that belief (or is unable to articulate them). But a Christian mind seeks to understand both the *content* of belief and the *reasons* for it (whether they be intellectual, emotional or prejudicial). Knowing why we believe certain things, as opposed to other things, helps us engage culture in a selectively discerning way. We are to be able to claim "truth" wherever we find it (as Paul quoted two Greek poets during his speech to the Areopagus in Acts 17) and we are able to identify and constructively respond to the rival cultural worldviews that swirl around us daily.

Paul writes of the power of ideas in 2 Corinthians 10. There he mentions "strongholds" that consist of false ideas:

> For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that

> sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. (2 Cor. 10:3–5)

Here Paul refers to "strongholds" that consist of "arguments" and "pretentions" that oppose the knowledge of God. A stronghold is a set of ideas, about sexuality, success, parenting, or whatever, that obscures the truth about God and what it means for human life to flourish in His world. As Christians, we are to be able to spot the worldviews we are competing with in the marketplace of ideas in order to "test them all" and to "hold on to what is good" (1 Thess. 5:21–22). The Christian mind runs everything that is seen and heard through the grid of Scripture. This doesn't require us to become experts, however. Not many of us will be as adept in the arena of ideas as J. P. is. It does require that we pause, reflect, and humbly search the Scriptures with others in order to "take every thought captive and make it obedient to Christ."

THE CULTIVATION OF THE INNER LIFE

While the early Christians valued the life of the mind, it did so not at the expense of the formation of character and virtue. The same apostle who speaks so highly of the Christian mind also issues these warnings about it:

> But knowledge puffs up while love builds up. (1 Cor. 8:1)

And

> If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. (1 Cor. 13:2)

The solution to the warning about "puffing up" isn't simply to remain in ignorance. It is, rather, the development of humility as we go about learning. So, we must not only care about a life of learning, but the nurturing of the soul as well.

J. P. begins his discussion by defining something he calls the false self. The false self is "the self we present to others, perhaps unconsciously, in order to make the world safe for us, to allow us to be in control of things, to gain attention or be ignored depending on our strategy, and to hide from others and ourselves what we are really like."[2] False selves consist of the individualized, narcissistic shell that is designed to cultivate an "image" or "representation" to ourselves and others (i.e., making sure we present ourselves as "successful," "good," "in control," or "having

it all together"). If we're not careful, the false self invites us to invest the bulk of our time and energy in propping up and protecting this image to the point where it can become so confused with the "real self" that it goes virtually unnoticed.

The project of managing and presenting the false self causes us to hide anything that could contradict the image we wish to project. So we learn to deny, repress, and pretend. We are forced to engage in damage control when our real selves leak out. We'll say things like, "That wasn't me," or "I don't know what I was thinking," or "That's not who I am."

If the focus of Christian discipleship is only on the life of the mind, then it is possible to accumulate knowledge but to remain "puffed up." Knowledge pursued in the absence of Christian character formation then serves only to prop up and extend the false self. We learn, not in order to love God with our minds, but to simply reconfirm that our false self doesn't need to change. Our head might be full, but our heart remains empty.

J. P. insists that robust Christian spirituality is instead focused on self-denial, not self-promotion. Jesus speaks very famously of self-denial in Matthew's Gospel:

> Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it. What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul? For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what they have done." (Matt. 16:24–27)

Self-denial isn't the absence of desire, or the putting down of oneself, or the inability to enjoy things. It's not pretending that I don't have wants, needs, or feelings. Rather, it is putting the false self in its place. It is dethroning the false self and allowing Jesus to form and shape the real self into His image. Jesus insists that this is the path to human flourishing. "Taking up" one's cross is more of a mindset than an action. It is orientation toward the whole of life. It is the call to abandon the false self's project of keeping "self" at the center's of one's focus and energy.

The practice of self-denial requires us to gradually increase, through habitual practice, having Jesus and His kingdom the center of my attention, energy, and focus, instead of myself. Self-denial, in J. P.'s words, is to "be preoccupied with

learning skillfully to find one's place in [God's] unfolding plan and play one's role well, to give one's life away for others for Christ's sake."[3]

This requires practice, and the intentional and habitual cultivation of spiritual disciplines. J. P. defines a Christian spiritual discipline as a "repeated bodily practice, done over and over again, in dependence on the Holy Spirit and under the direction of Jesus and other wise teachers in his way, to enable one to get good at certain things in life that one cannot learn by direct effort."[4] Examples of spiritual disciplines include prayer, fasting, solitude, silence, and study.

The goal of the spiritual disciplines is to partner with the Holy Spirit in the work of the transformation of our inner selves. Instead of being dominated by the false self, the disciple of Jesus gradually and progressively develops habits of mind, soul, and heart that allow the Holy Spirit to form and shape our character away from sinful habits and patterns, and into alignment with our identity in Christ.

J. P. pays particular attention to the tendency among Western evangelicals toward emotional distance and fragmentation. The renovation of our character includes paying attention to the emotions and cries of our hearts, and the bringing of our whole selves (including the ugly and shameful parts) to Christ for healing and forgiveness. We must cultivate tender hearts to go with our vigorous minds. In the book of Acts, the early Christians were compassionate as well as thoughtful. We must remain people who live from our hearts, not afraid of strong emotion, but not dominated by it either. The cultivation of spiritual disciplines toward the transformation of our hearts and character requires us to go to those places inside of us where disappointment, pain, resentment, or emptiness hold sway. We cannot be fully "whole" unless our hearts are exposed to the grace and truth of Jesus. He leads us to stop hiding from others and ourselves in order to expose the false self.

THE CULTIVATION OF THE SPIRIT'S MIRACULOUS POWER

For some, the third section will be the most controversial in the book. J. P. argues that if someone only cultivates a Christian mind and the inner life, then Christianity will be, by and large, a self-help program, designed only for self-improvement. What is still needed is the recovery and experience of the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit. J. P. insists that the Church should expect to experience miracles on a regular basis. This isn't something that one just "wills" to happen, but must instead be welcomed and nurtured.

Jesus promises the Holy Spirit to His disciples on the night before He was crucified:

> Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it. If you love me, keep my commands. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. (John 14:12–17)

Jesus expects that the ministry begun by Him during His lifetime would continue after His death, resurrection, and ascension to the Father. The "greater things" that Jesus speaks of here don't refer to things of greater *significance* (last I checked, none of us were dying for the sins of the world), but to the greater *scope* of ministry the disciples will do once the Holy Spirit has been given to them. Jesus' presence was localized during His time on earth, but now, through His Spirit, Christians (i.e., "little Christs") would proclaim the good news and demonstrate the power of the kingdom to the uttermost ends of the earth.

The book of Acts records for us, of course, that the work of Jesus didn't diminish after His ascension but His presence and power were universalized through the Spirit given to the church. Acts records the evidence of the presence of the kingdom through the disciples through story after story of prophecy, healing, exorcism, resurrection, and boldness to witness. These stories demonstrated that God was continuing the work of Jesus through His followers.

J. P. recounts many personal and global stories of these same manifestations of God's power, and invites us to adjust our expectations to be more in line with biblical testimony. J. P. argues that there is no reason why supernatural manifestations shouldn't be more characteristic of life in our churches. He offers three lines of New Testament evidence to support the ongoing expectation and experience of miraculous ministry in the Church today.

The first line of evidence is the gospel preached by both Jesus and the early Church in Acts, the gospel of the kingdom of God. The kingdom was central to Jesus' preaching, as the gospel writers make clear:

> After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!" (Mark 1:14–15)
>
> Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people. (Matt. 4:23)

The announcement of the new availability of the kingdom of God through Jesus included forgiveness of sins (and what is commonly called "justification by faith"), but was larger than that. J. P. defines the kingdom as "the reign, rule, or authority of God himself; secondarily, it is the realm in which that rule is directly exercised, consisting largely in the laws governing the natural world and, more importantly, the individual and collective hearts of those who have bowed to God's rule."[5] The gospel preached by Jesus and the early Church was that the direct rule of God was now directly available to everyone in and through confidence in Jesus Christ.

The Gospels and Acts attest that as the kingdom of God advances on the earth, it displaces the kingdom of Satan (Matt. 12:24–29). The miracles performed by Jesus and the apostles provided evidence of Jesus' kingdom claims, but more importantly, were demonstrations of the kingdom's power over disease, sin, death and darkness. Jesus not only proclaimed the kingdom of God, but also demonstrated its power and authority over nature, demons, sickness, and even death. The activity of the early Church continued to extend the kingdom in both word and deed (Acts 8:12; 19:8; 20:25; 28:30–31).

J. P.'s second and third lines of evidence are extensions of this point. He points out that Jesus' miracles were more than just proofs of His divinity; they also show Jesus' complete and utter dependence on the Holy Spirit. Jesus' commission to His followers made their reception of the gift of the Holy Spirit central to their ability to fulfill the mandate He set before them:

> Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. He told them, "This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high." (Luke 24:45–49)

> On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit." Then they gathered around him and asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?" He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." (Acts 1:4–8)
>
> Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven." (John 20:21–23)

In other words, the disciples were expected to carry on Jesus' ministry through the gift of the Holy Spirit. They were invited to exercise the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit as they proclaimed and demonstrated the kingdom. Jesus modeled what human life looks like when it is continually submitted to and lived in dependence on the Spirit of God.

The Church has every reason to expect this supernatural ministry of the Holy Spirit to continue in our own day. J. P. points out (as his third line of evidence) the continuing abandonment of the theological position of Cessationism as evidence that more and more people are recognizing this fact. Cessationism is the view that the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit (e.g., healing, tongues, prophecy) ceased with the death of the apostles and the formation of the New Testament canon and are no longer available to the followers of Jesus today. That Cessationism is increasingly a minority viewpoint among scholars does not mean that it is false; it simply is another line of evidence suggesting the importance of the recovery of the power and presence of the Holy Spirit in today's Church. Even those who will continue to hold the Cessationist position may increase their passion and expectation of the supernatural ministry of the Holy Spirit. Moreland reminds the Church of the areas of commonality that exist between the various positions on the theological spectrum regarding this issue, and exhorts believers in Jesus to seek with increasing intensity to believe God for more of His supernatural and miraculous power in and through our churches.

For the Church Today

Through *Kingdom Triangle*, J. P. offers a fresh and needed word to the Church today. What is so refreshing about J. P.'s methodology is his holistic approach to Christian spirituality and maturity. He brings together various theological traditions that have been normally suspicious of one another, and integrates them in order to meet the missional challenges of today's world. The significance of this cannot be overstated. The Church is known far more for its divisiveness than its unity; and more for its separation than its integration. J. P. models balance and integration—two aspects of Christian discipleship sorely neglected in today's Church.

The cultivating of the Christian mind is critical to discipleship, but not to the neglect of Christian character or openness to the Holy Spirit. Likewise, too many have been focused on the primarily experiential and/or supernatural aspects of Christianity, without much consideration for the authority of the Scriptures and respect for the life of the mind. J. P. emphasizes the need for *balance*; all three aspects of the Kingdom Triangle are necessary for Christian growth and maturity. Focusing only on one or two facets of the Triangle will lead us astray.

That is why I offer the following suggestion with no little trepidation. For the Gospels and Acts offer one other aspect of Christian discipleship that is implicit in J. P.'s accounting, but needs to be given further emphasis. I understand that this changes Moreland's Kingdom Triangle to a Kingdom Quadrilateral (or Rectangle, or Parallelogram, or Square, or Rhombus), but such is the price of biblical fidelity.

The leg that I would like to add to J. P.'s triangle is the development of a *missional mindset*. While "missional" is a ubiquitous buzzword today, the concept is deeply rooted in both the Old and New Testament scriptures. An overview of the biblical narrative will help make this clear.

God's good creation (accounted for in Genesis 1 and 2) is marred and tainted by the entrance of sin and death into the world through human and angelic rebellion (Gen. 3). The effects of disobedience ripple throughout all of creation both before and after the flood (Gen. 4–11). God's response to this state of affairs is to call a man named Abram, and promise to form him into a community that will be a blessing to the entire world. The nation of Israel was formed from Abram's descendants and was given the mandate to be a holy priesthood and a light to the nations. The promises given to Abram and the mandate given to Israel were *for*

the sake of the nations. They were blessed, in order to serve and bless the world. Jesus commissions His followers with the same worldwide mandate:

> Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matt. 28:18–20)

And again:

> He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." (Acts 1:7–8)

It is, I believe, possible to cultivate a Christian mind, engage in transformational spiritual disciplines, and experience greater degrees of the power of the Holy Spirit, while neglecting the mandate to evangelize the nations. The three legs of J. P.'s Triangle exist only for the sake of a fourth: to *witness to the nations* about the reality of the resurrected and ascended Jesus. The mandate of the Church, and the individual Christian, remains the same today as it was in Abram and Israel's day: to serve as priests and missionaries to the entire world (1 Peter 2:9–12; 2 Cor. 5:16–20).

J. P. would no doubt agree. His life bespeaks his personal commitment to the proclamation and demonstration of the good news of Jesus to others. The primary reason I would add a "missional mindset" to the three legs of the Kingdom Triangle is because such a mindset is completely foreign to the Western Church. For too long the Church has considered America a "Christian" nation, when in reality it is no such thing. But now, the evidence is too significant to ignore and the Church in the West must take a missionary posture toward America. That invites a radical re-thinking of how Church and mission must be done in a deeply secularized and "post-Christian" culture. J. P. has given us critical resources in *Kingdom Triangle*; indeed, nothing could be more important that the three legs he has outlined. But they must be cultivated, nurtured, taught, and practiced in a manner that recognizes the burden of the Church to adapt and form itself around the missionary practices of the early Church. Christians no longer constitute a cultural,

social, or intellectual majority; this is good news, as the Church of Jesus has always done its best work from the margins of culture, as opposed to its center.

But such work is not done easily, as a missional mindset must continually be prioritized if it is to combat the constant inertia of church communities to look after their own needs, and neglect the needs of the world. Even the early Church struggle to fulfill their trans-national mandate:

> On that day a great persecution broke out against the church in Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. Godly men buried Stephen and mourned deeply for him. But Saul began to destroy the church. Going from house to house, he dragged off both men and women and put them in prison. (Acts 8:1–3)

Notice the deliberate repetition of "Judea and Samaria" in Acts 1:8 and 8:1. The implication is the church hadn't "scattered" to the ends of the earth on its own; it took persecution to move it outward. One can imagine how attractive it must have been to listen to the apostle's teaching, meet in homes and the temple courts in Jerusalem, and stay close to the center of this new Jewish sect. It is not surprising that no one wanted to leave.

That same missional lethargy exists in our churches today, only to a much greater degree. Churches focus on felt needs, marketing, and providing programming to meet every conceivable niche. In such an environment, the practice and development of the Kingdom Triangle can too easily be co-opted in service to congregations looking for the next great thing. A missional mindset is therefore required before the Triangle can be most fully expressed. The demands of mission in America drive us to the three legs of the Kingdom Triangle; not as empty church consumers looking for the next great program, but rather as weak and broken people, determined to witness to the reality of Jesus in a culture that is progressively suspicious and antagonistic to the gospel we proclaim.

Notes

1. J. P. Moreland, *Kingdom Triangle* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007), 13.
2. Ibid., 141.
3. Ibid., 146.
4. Ibid., 152.
5. Ibid., 173.

Afterword: Reflections *on the* Journey Ahead

J. P. MORELAND

IT IS A DEEPLY HUMBLING (indeed, almost humiliating!), moving experience to have a group of former students and current colleagues, whom I love dearly and respect unreservedly, come together to reflect on my life and ideas. I thank each of them and pray that this volume will be of help to readers in their own Christian journeys.

I came to Jesus in the middle of the Jesus Movement in 1968, and early on I came to value the life of the Christian mind, an inner heart that is healthy and becoming like Jesus, a supernatural interaction with God and His kingdom, and community and friendship in which we cheer for each other and rejoice in others' successes, all aimed at honoring God and fulfilling the Great Commission. Accordingly, the purpose of my life since then has been to embody these values in order to know, serve and enjoy God and to enlist, equip, and aid as many as possible to join me in the pilgrimage.

I went into vocational ministry in 1970. As of this writing, I have continued in that calling for forty-three years. While not without its difficulties, to be honest, it has been the greatest adventure I could imagine. During that time, I have witnessed a number of encouraging trends. Foremost is the staggering spread of Christianity going on all around the world today, much of it based on signs and wonders, signaling the invasion of God's kingdom into cultural contexts open

to that sort of invasion. In American culture, the emergence of conservative Christian scholarship in philosophy, New Testament studies, and the Intelligent Design movement are very encouraging, and I urge Christian thinkers in other fields to imitate what is going on in these movements. I am also heartened by the growing apologetics movement in the United States, the revitalization of supernatural Christianity in the Third Wave movement of the 1980s (while admitting it was and is sometimes characterized by unhelpful, unbiblical excesses), and the emergence of the spiritual formation movement due to the writings of Dallas Willard, Richard Foster, Henry Nouwen, and others.

In spite of these gains, I cannot help but think that we are losing the struggle for the hearts and minds of folks in our culture. The growth of a vocal and highly influential secular elite is something Christians have largely been unable to stop or infiltrate. The Church is far too trivial and formatively shallow to be counted on to produce a counterculture of Jesus followers whose individual and corporate lives are intrinsically exemplary and profound. And compared to our Third World brothers and sisters, our expectations in prayer and the supernatural are pretty low.

The secularization of the culture, and the concomitant marginalization of ethics, theology, and biblical teaching to Francis Schaeffer's upper story, are my deepest concerns for the future. Speaking of the negative impact of secularism, of which scientism is a part, Dallas Willard warns that:

> the crushing weight of the secular outlook . . . permeates or pressures every thought we have today. Sometimes it even forces those who self-identify as Christian teachers to set aside Jesus' plain statements about the reality and total relevance of the kingdom of God and replace them with philosophical speculations whose only recommendation is their consistency with a "modern" [i.e., contemporary] mindset. The powerful though vague and unsubstantiated presumption is that *something has been found out* that renders a spiritual understanding of reality in the manner of Jesus simply foolish to those who are "in the know."[1]

In 1941, Harvard sociologist Pitirim A. Sorokin wrote a book entitled *The Crisis of Our Age*. Sorokin divided cultures into two major types: *sensate* and *ideational*. A *sensate* culture is one in which people only believe in the reality of the physical universe capable of being experienced with the five senses. A sensate culture is secular, this worldly, and empirical.

By contrast, an *ideational* culture embraces the sensory world, but goes on to accept the notion that an extra-empirical immaterial reality can be known as well, a reality consisting of God, the soul, immaterial beings, values, purposes, and various abstract objects like numbers and propositions. Sorokin noted that a sensate culture eventually disintegrates because it lacks the intellectual resources necessary to sustain a public and private life conducive of corporate and individual human flourishing. After all, if we can't know anything about values, life after death, God, and so forth, how can we receive solid guidance to lead a life of wisdom and character?

As we move through the early portion of the twenty-first century, it is obvious that the West, including the United States, is *sensate*. To see this, consider the following. In 1989, the state of California issued a new Science Framework to provide guidance for the state's public school science classrooms. In that document, advice is given to teachers about how to handle students who approach them with reservations about the theory of evolution:

> At times some students may insist that certain conclusions of science cannot be true because of certain religious or philosophical beliefs they hold. . . . It is appropriate for the teacher to express in this regard, "I understand that you may have personal reservations about accepting this scientific evidence, but it is scientific knowledge about which there is no reasonable doubt among scientists in their field, and it is my responsibility to teach it because it is part of our common intellectual heritage."[2]

The real importance of this statement lies not in its promotion of evolution over creation, though that is no small matter in its own right. No, the real danger in the Framework's advice resides in the picture of knowledge it presupposes: the only knowledge we can have about reality—and, thus, the only claims that deserve the backing of public institutions—is empirical knowledge gained by the hard sciences.

Nonempirical claims (those that can't be tested with the five senses) outside the hard sciences, such as those at the core of ethics, political theory, and religion are not items of knowledge but, rather, matters of private feeling. Note carefully the words associated with science: *conclusions*, *evidence*, *knowledge*, *no reasonable doubt*, *intellectual heritage*. These deeply cognitive terms express the view that science and science alone exercises the intellectual right (and responsibility) of defining reality. By contrast, religious claims are described in

distinctively non-cognitive language: *beliefs*, *personal reservations.*

In such a culture, we now live and move and have our being. Currently, scientific naturalism is the dominant worldview of Western culture. Scientific naturalism is the view that the physical cosmos studied by science is all there is. Scientific naturalism has two central components: a view of reality and a view of how we know things. Regarding reality, scientific naturalism implies that everything that exists is composed of matter or emerges out of matter when it achieves a suitable complexity. There is no spiritual world, no God, no angels or demons, no souls of men and beasts, no life after death, no moral absolutes, no objective purpose to life, no such thing as the kingdom of God. And scientific naturalism implies that physical science is the only, or at the very least, a vastly superior way of gaining knowledge. Since competence in life depends on knowledge (you can't be competent at selling insurance if you don't know anything about it!), this implies that there just is no such thing as learning to live life competently in the kingdom of God. Spiritual competence is a silly idea.

Scientific naturalism has led to a culture in which a thin pluralism and tolerance reign supreme. And with truth dethroned as the guide for life, the absolutization of desire satisfaction and instant gratification arose to fill the vacuum and, given the sensual nature of the West, no-fault sex is the *summum bonum* of our schools, neighborhoods, and sources of entertainment. And with the death of God, a substitute is needed to satisfy the human need for transcendence, and the ideal candidate turns out to be something that gives one the catharsis of meaning and commitment to a cause while not requiring personal responsibility and change on behalf of the individual. In my view, this is a major (and not the only) reason why left-leaning causes are so attractive—they give people the feeling of meaning and they do not require mastery of people's inner lives or desires.

In light of these reflections, my suggestions for charting a way forward center on what I call the Kingdom Triangle: the life of the mind, the inner life of spiritual formation, an interactive relationship with the supernatural nature of the kingdom of God. Let's look at these in order.

Cultivating the Christian Mind

In my view, the central question facing us is this: Are the central teachings of historic Christianity items of knowledge or merely truths to be accepted by an act of will or blind faith? Is Christianity a knowledge tradition or a mere faith tradition?

And in this culture, this question is inextricably connected to four other questions: (1) Is there nonempirical, extra-scientific knowledge, especially in ethics and theology? (2) Is there any such thing as immaterial reality and nonphysical entities? (3) What is a human person and human flourishing based on the nature of the human person, and how does one become a flourishing person of character and virtue? (4) If God is real, how do I attach to Him and experience an intimate love relationship with my heavenly Father? With this in mind, please permit me to offer some advice.

A few years ago, Christian philosopher Paul Moser wrote an important article in which he distinguished two different approaches to Christian scholarship—the discussion and the obedience modes.[3] The typical academic approach is the discussion mode according to which the scholar loves the intellectual stimulation of asking questions, having intellectual dialogs, and engaging in the quest for clarity, all from the perspective of a disengaged academic posture wherein the conversation and the prestige that comes from engaging in it are ends in themselves. By contrast, the obedience mode is done under the Lordship of Jesus, and has as its goal obedience to His love commands with a special view toward providing help, faith, and encouragement for brothers and sisters in the Church (along with aid for those outside the faith in coming to Jesus). Moser rightly points out that the obedience mode—not the discussion mode—is the correct posture for the Christian and I believe that such a posture is of crucial importance today when it comes to adopting and assessing our views on various topics in light of their impact on whether or not the central teachings of Christianity are viewed as items of knowledge.

It is on the basis of knowledge (or perceived knowledge)—not faith, commitment, or sincerity—that people are given the right to lead, act in public, and accomplish important tasks. We give certain people the right to fix our cars, pull our teeth, write our contracts, and so on, because we take those people to be in possession of the relevant body of knowledge. Moreover, it is the possession of knowledge (and, more specifically, the knowledge that one has knowledge), and not mere truth alone, that gives people confidence and courage to lead, act, and risk. Thus, as I have already said, it is of crucial importance that we promote the central teachings of Christianity as a body of knowledge and not as a set of faith-practices to be accepted on the basis of mere belief or a shared narrative alone. To fail at this point is to risk being marginalized and disregarded as those promoting a privatized set of feelings or desires that fall short of knowledge.

In 1983, Os Guinness wrote a book in which he claimed that the Church had become its own grave digger.[4] The upshot of Guinness's claim was that the very things that were bringing short-term growth in the Christian community also were, unintentionally and imperceptibly, sowing the very sorts of ideas that would eventually undercut the Church's distinctive power and authority. The so-called grave digger does not hurt the Church on purpose. Usually well intentioned, he or she simply adopts views or practices that are counterproductive to and undermining of a vibrant, attractive Christian community. In my view, there are certain contemporary currents of thought that undercut the cognitive authority of Christian truth claims. I think there are at least three intellectual areas that, if embraced, run the risk of turning us into our own grave diggers.

Currently, naturalism has cultural hegemony. It should be clear that naturalism is not consistent with biblical Christianity. If that's true, then the Church should do all it can to undermine the worldview of naturalism and to promote, among other things, the cognitive, alethic nature of theology, biblical teaching, and ethics. This means that when Christians consider adopting certain views widely accepted in the culture, they must factor into their consideration whether or not such adoption would enhance naturalism's hegemony and help dig the Church's own grave by contributing to a hostile, undermining plausibility structure.

Consider as an example the abandonment of belief in the historical reality of Adam and Eve. Now if someone does not believe Adam and Eve were real historical individuals, then so be it. However, my present concern is not with the truth or falsity of the historical view. Rather, my concern is the readiness, sometimes eagerness, of some to set aside the traditional view, the ease with which the real estate of historical Christian commitments is abandoned, the unintended consequences of jettisoning such a belief. Given the current plausibility structure set by scientific naturalism, rejecting the historical Adam and Eve contributes to the marginalization of Christian teaching in the public square and in the Church and thereby those who reject Adam and Eve unintentionally undermine the Church. How so?

First, the rejection reinforces the idea that science and science alone is competent to get at the real truth of reality; theology and biblical teaching are not up to this task. If historically consistent understandings of biblical teaching conflict with what most scientists claim, then so much the worst for those understandings.

Second, the rejection reinforces the privatized noncognitive status of bibli-

cal doctrine, ethics, and practices—especially supernatural ones that need to be construed as knowledge if they are to be passed on to others with integrity and care. Since the Church has been mistaken about one of its central teachings for two thousand years, why should we trust the Church regarding its teaching about extramarital sex or the veracity of the gift of prophesy? Admittedly, the history of the Church is not infallible in its teachings; still, to the degree that its central teachings through the ages are revised, to that degree the non-revised teachings are undermined in their cognitive and religious authority. The non-revised teachings become more tentative.

Finally, the rejection reinforces the modernist notion that we are individuals, cut off from our diachronic community, and we are free to adopt our beliefs and practices in disregard of that community and our adoption's impact on it.

If I am right about the broader issues, then the rejection of a historical Adam and Eve has wider implications than those that surface in trying to reinterpret certain biblical texts, as important as those issues are. The very status of biblical, theological, and ethical teachings as knowledge is at stake in the current cultural milieu as is the Church's cognitive marginalization to a place outside the culture's plausibility structure. Those who reject a historical Adam and Eve, inadvertently, harm the church.

I suspect that most Christians still accept a historical Adam and Eve. But there are three areas of reflection that involve views that may be more acceptable to Christian people that, in my view, seriously undermine the plausibility of Christian teaching in general and supernatural practices in particular.

Theistic Evolution

It is widely acknowledged that evolutionary theory, to be clarified in more detail shortly, has "made the world safe for atheists" as Richard Dawkins put it. While evolutionary theory does not entail the falsehood of an interventionist Christian God, the latter is much less plausible given the former than it is given a rejection of general evolutionary theory. Thus, former Cornell biologist William Provine proclaimed:

> Let me summarize my views on what modern evolutionary biology tells us loud and clear. . . . There are no gods, no purposes, no goal-directed forces of any kind. There is no life after death. . . . There is no ultimate foundation for ethics, no ultimate meaning, and no free will for humans, either.[5]

It can hardly be doubted that the impact of evolutionary theory is its significant contribution to the secularization of culture, a shift that places a supernatural God who heals, speaks, and so on outside the plausibility structure of Western society. In light of that, why would any Christian want to flirt with theistic evolution? There are three general understandings of evolution: change within limits (microevolution), the thesis of common descent, and the blind watchmaker thesis. The first is accepted by everyone, the second is not yet established, and the third seems to me to be wildly implausible, especially given Christian theism as a background belief. Why? Because the blind watchmaker thesis is the idea that solely blind, mechanical, efficient causal processes are sufficient to produce all the life we see without any need or room for a god to be involved in the process, and there are good reasons to reject this thesis. Recently, even the atheist philosopher Thomas Nagel has weighed in on the matter and claimed that this Darwinian thesis is implausible.[6] Theistic evolution is the view that the blind watchmaker thesis is true, there is no scientifically detectable evidence for God being involved in the process of evolution (Remember: theistic evolutionists are committed to methodological naturalism), and we are free to reject metaphysical naturalism even though we accept methodological naturalism while doing science.

But, theistic evolutionists fail to provide sufficient reasons for rejecting metaphysical naturalism, given that "we have no need of that (the God) hypothesis" in any of the sciences. Why be a theist in the first place? After all, while evolution is logically consistent with theism, there is nothing in evolution that would lead one *to* theism, and if "the God hypothesis" isn't needed until humans appear, it is less credible to think it is needed subsequently. Given (1) the presence of a very vibrant, intellectually sophisticated interdisciplinary Intelligent Design movement, (2) the atheistic implications that most naturally follow from accepting general evolutionary theory (and many, perhaps most, draw those implications), and (3) the fact that the blind watchmaker thesis is far from being justified, why would a Christian supernaturalist want to embrace something that undermines the plausibility of a Christian teaching that embraces a supernaturalist "interventionist" God?

If science has shown that since the Big Bang until the emergence of *homo sapiens* there is no good reason to believe in such a God, isn't it special pleading to embrace this Deity when it comes to demons, prophesy, and so forth? Surely, science, e.g., psychology, has, under the same methodological naturalist constraints, "shown" that demon possession is nothing but a psychological disor-

der, and religious experience is just psychological projection. It seems to me that these latter naturalizations are more consistent with theistic evolution (e.g., they both adopt methodological naturalism, they both place religion in a noncognitive upper story of faith) than with Intelligent Design.

If we want to be consistent and to contend that Christian teaching in general, and, more specifically, supernatural activities are, indeed, items of knowledge, it seems to me that we should not let the naturalist camel's nose under the tent from the Big Bang up to the appearance of human life. Clearly, if we need to postulate an active God to explain the origin and development of life, as Intelligent Design advocates claim, then before we step into the door of a church service, we are already warranted in believing supernaturalism. But if we come to church as theistic evolutionists, a supernatural God who answers prayers, heals the sick, and speaks to His children is less at home in our worldview and, indeed, may fairly be called ad hoc.

Neuroscience and the Soul

The great Presbyterian scholar J. Gresham Machen once observed: "I think we ought to hold not only that man has a soul, but that it is important that he should know that he has a soul."[7] From a Christian perspective, this is a trustworthy saying. Christianity is a dualist, interactionist religion in this sense: God, angels/demons, and the souls of men and beasts are immaterial substances that can causally interact with the world. Specifically, human persons are (or have) souls that are spiritual substances that ground personal identity in a disembodied intermediate state between death and final resurrection.[8] Clearly, this was the Pharisees' view in Intertestamental Judaism, and Jesus (Matt. 22:23–33; cf. Matt. 10:28) and Paul (Acts 23:6–10; cf. 2 Cor. 12:1–4) side with the Pharisees on this issue over against the Sadducees.[9] In my view, Christian physicalism involves a politically correct revision of the biblical text that fails to be convincing.[10]

Nevertheless, today, many hold that, while broadly logically possible, dualism is no longer plausible in light of advances in modern science. This attitude is becoming increasingly prominent in Christian circles. Thus, Christian philosopher Nancey Murphy claims that physicalism is not primarily a philosophical thesis but the hard core of a scientific research program for which there is ample evidence. This evidence consists in the fact that "biology, neuroscience, and cognitive science have provided accounts of the dependence on physical processes of *specific*

faculties once attributed to the soul."[11] Dualism cannot be *proven* false—a dualist can always appeal to correlations or functional relations between soul and brain/body—but advances in science make it a view with little justification. According to Murphy, "Science has provided a massive amount of evidence suggesting that we need not postulate the existence of an entity such as a soul or mind in order to explain life and consciousness."[12]

I cannot undertake here a critique of physicalism and a defense of dualism.[13] Suffice it to say that dualism is a widely accepted, vibrant intellectual position. I suspect that the majority of Christian philosophers are dualists. And it is important to mention that neuroscience really has nothing to do with which view is more plausible. Without getting into details, this becomes evident when we observe that leading neuroscientists—Nobel Prize winner John Eccles, U.C.L.A. neuroscientist Jeffrey Schwartz, and Mario Beaureguard, are all dualists and they know the neuroscience. Their dualism, and the central intellectual issues involved in the debate, is quite independent of neuroscientific data.

The irrelevance of neuroscience also becomes evident when we consider the recent bestseller *Proof of Heaven* by Eben Alexander. Regardless of one's view of the credibility of Near Death Experiences (NDEs) in general, or of Alexander's in particular, one thing is clear. Before whatever it was that happened to him, Alexander believed the (allegedly) standard neuroscientific view that specific regions of the brain generate and possess specific states of consciousness. But after his NDE, Alexander came to believe that it is the soul that possesses consciousness, not the brain, and the various mental states of the soul are in two-way causal interaction with specific regions of the brain. Here's the point: His change in viewpoint was a change in metaphysics that did not require him to reject or alter a single neuroscientific fact. Dualism and physicalism are empirically equivalent views consistent with all and only the same scientific data. Thus, the authority of empirical data in science cannot be claimed on either side.

Given this, and given the fact that Jesus believed in a soul, as did the other biblical writers, it is hard to see why believers would reject dualism in favor of some form of Christian physicalism. Moreover, loss of belief in the soul has contributed to a loss of belief in life after death. As John Hick pointed out, "This considerable decline within society as a whole, accompanied by a lesser decline within the churches, of the belief in personal immortality clearly reflects the assumption within our culture that we should only believe in what we experience,

plus what the accredited sciences certify to us."[14]

What is the motive, the reasoning here, for those Christians who reject dualism? If the Church's teaching on this has been wrong for two thousand years, why should we believe her teaching when it comes to a host of other things? As with theistic evolution's accomodationism, physicalism accedes to science a hegemony it does not deserve. And this is not just some outspoken dualist's opinion either!

For example, the overstatement of neuroscience's authority is increasingly recognized from various sources, including some neuroscientists. As Alissa Quart's Op-Ed in the *New York Times* observes, "Writing in the journal *Neuron*, the researchers concluded that 'logically irrelevant neuroscience information imbues an argument with authoritative, scientific credibility.' Another way of saying this is that bogus science gives vague, undisciplined thinking the look of seriousness and truth."[15]

Here's the important takeaway: Such irrelevant appeals to neuroscientific authority undermine the view that theology, biblical teaching, and commonsense views of the mind, relationships, and so on can stand on their own without the need for scientific backing. Such appeals reinforce the noncognitive nature of theology and biblical teaching, and they contribute to the placement of Christian teaching outside the culture's plausibility structure. It seems inconsistent and ad hoc to allow science to revise theological anthropology while not allowing it to do the same regarding demonization, religious experience, and other areas of biblical teaching.

Doctrine and Ethics

As I have admitted earlier, the history of the Church's teaching is not infallible. Still, we should be very careful and reluctant to revise what the Church has held for centuries, especially when two factors are present: (1) there is an intellectually robust defense of the traditional view currently available; (2) there is politically correct pressure suddenly to "find" that the Bible all along taught what our secular friends and peers tell us it should teach if we are going to be culturally and academically respectable. There is a sober mindedness that should accompany any self-identifying Christian scholars and pastors regarding these matters, since our laity often look to us or consider us as representative spokespersons of the Christian tradition. To many laypeople, it seems hardly a coincidence that just

when the culture puts pressure on us to believe that P, even though the history of biblical interpretation supports ~P, we conveniently discover that we have misunderstood the Scriptures all along!

I think the Christian community expects more courage out of its leaders than this, and we run the risk of making our own desired views of biblical interpretation more authoritative than the text itself. It is as though some exegetes have a desired view they want to sustain, and they fiddle with the Bible until they get it to turn out the "right" way. It has always seemed to me that revisions of the Church's teaching about the role of women in the Church and the morality of homosexuality are suspicious in just this way. I am not arguing that the current revisionist views are false, though I believe that to be the case. What I am urging us to consider is the unintended consequences of embracing the revisionist positions—the marginalization of Christian doctrine and ethics (after all, if we "find" the Church was wrong for two thousand years at just the time when it is convenient to make such a discovery, what does this say about the epistemic and alethic status of the views we just happened not to have revised at present?) and the placement of Christianity outside the plausibility structure.

None of my comments are meant to promote a bounded set by which we decide insiders and outsiders. For example, in my view, theistic evolutionists are dear brothers and sisters who belong just as much as I hope I do. Still, ideas have consequences. As I have said earlier, if someone believes the revised views to be true, then so be it. But given my considerations about unintended consequences, one should be hesitant and not eager to engage in revisionism. And if there is a robust defense available for the traditional position, why not stick with it? We need more courage to be different from our culture, including our academic culture, and revisionism seems to be an easy way out that avoids the need for courage. And, in my view, the avoidance of revisionism nicely exemplifies the obedience and not the discussion mode of the scholarly life.

THE CHRISTIAN THINKER, SPIRITUAL FORMATION, AND THE CULTIVATION OF A TENDER HEART

In a penetrating, must-read article, Richard Davis points out that too many who value scholarship and the intellectual life do so with an inordinate eye on their own reputation, cleverness, and esteem.[16] Christian scholarship (Davis speaks specifically of philosophy), he reminds us, involves deep union with Jesus and

His humility, it is *agape* oriented, it is Spirit-filled, and it is done to serve others, especially one's brothers and sisters in Christ's body.

In my opinion, too little Christian scholarship is done in the spirit of Davis's characterization. Instead, it is too self-promoting, often motivated to work out the scholar's own woundedness or anger toward God or the Christian community, frequently done to find academic justification for the scholar's own unbelief, and sometimes performed to be accepted in the broader academic world and to avoid embarrassment with being identified with the Bible-believing Christian community. In my view, what often lies at the bottom of this sort of intellectual activity is not an intellectual problem; it is a spiritual one. In my own experience, there are certain practices that can be of help here.

First, one needs to engage in serious self-examination on two fronts: commitment to the Lordship of Jesus and the supremacy of His cause, and efforts to sustain one's first love. I find it helpful to look regularly at Matthew 16:24–27 and ask myself if my overall posture in life is to learn to give myself away to others for Jesus' sake. If not, I seek to repent of this and reorient myself according to this text. I also regularly examine myself to see whether or not I have a warm, tender, affectionate heart for God. Sustaining such a heart involves several things: (1) I often call God *Abba* (Daddy) and seek to relate to Him as my tender, loving Father. This may require of me that I deal with father issues regarding my earthly father, but it is worth the price to deal with those issues. (2) I will envision myself on a blanket in a field and picture the Lord Jesus walking toward me. When He reaches me, He grabs my face in His hands, tells me He loves me, and asks me if I have any requests of Him. (3) I talk to God hundreds of times a day when I have a minute here and there. (4) I listen to and sing along with praise music in my car, and actively engage in worship at church. I try to use songs that are sung *to* God and are not merely *about* Him. (5) I spent five years in good Christian therapy so I could learn more how to live in my heart and feel my feelings. Too many Christian thinkers are out of touch with their feelings and, as a result, they cannot feel warm toward God and others.

Second, I regularly practice the disciplines of solitude and secrecy. Regarding solitude, four to five times a week I go to a specific place in my home, relax, and spend an hour in quiet reflection. At the beginning of that time, I invite the Lord's presence and tell Him I am listening if He wants to speak to me during my time. I have committed five to six key texts (from two to six verses each) to memory and

use them every day as a source of reflection and prayer. So I will recite some of those verses to the Lord and use their content to orient my prayers for the things of concern to me. I will then reflect about my life, family, work, and so forth. I try to face any harmful feelings or tendencies I find in myself, and I regularly dedicate my work to God and His kingdom and turn over my reputation to His care. And I seek to get in touch with my heart and emotions so I can present them to God for His help. I often add the discipline of secrecy, refraining from sharing victories (e.g., a good lecture I gave or something that got published) with others, even though it would be permissible to do so. My purpose in this is to unhook from my need for the approval of others.

Third, I place a priority on cultivating deep, intimate relationships with my wife and a group of safe, close Christian friends. This enables me regularly to take my mind off myself and place it on someone else. It facilitates my ability to attach emotionally with other people and live out an authentic Christian life in the safe confines of friendship. Christian thinkers are too often loners, and I do not believe we were meant to live that way.

Finally, I practice the discipline of gratitude. Due to my heredity and upbringing, I have a predisposition to anxiety and depression. One way to avoid these is to train yourself to see the glass half full and not half empty, that is, to habitualize a positive, thankful approach to life. And the best way to do that involves a negative and a positive step. Negatively, learn to spot early on any catastrophizing or totalizing thoughts you have in which you take fears and so forth, blow them up out of proportion, and engage in fearful, negative self-talk. When you spot the negative thought, tell yourself that it isn't true, that it is overstated, and seek to undermine the thought. Then, positively, turn to God in prayer and thank Him for, say, five to six things in your life, ranging from little things like the taste of coffee to large things like friends and family. I will do this around one hundred times a day, and by now, such expressions of gratitude have become a habit and they have colored my perception of life. The discipline of gratitude keeps one from becoming sour on life and is very, very life giving.

Obviously, the spiritual life involves much more than I have been able to mention here. But in my own journey as a Christian thinker, I find that there is power and prestige in being such a person, and I want to resist worshiping my *curriculum vita*. The practices I have just enumerated have been helpful to me in my own journey in this area of life.

THE SUPERNATURAL NATURE OF GOD'S KINGDOM AND SPIRIT

Our current Western cultural plausibility structure elevates science and scorns and mocks religion, especially Christian teaching. As a result, believers in Western cultures do not as readily believe the supernatural worldview of the Bible in comparison with their Third World brothers and sisters. As Christian anthropologist Charles Kraft observes,

> In comparison to other societies, Americans and other North Atlantic peoples are *naturalistic*. Non-Western peoples are frequently concerned about the activities of supernatural beings. Though many Westerners retain a vague belief in God, most deny that other supernatural beings even exist. The wide-ranging supernaturalism of most of the societies of the world is absent for most of our people. . . . Our focus is on the natural world, with little or no attention paid to the supernatural world.[17]

If you had to guess, what would you identify as the most prominent source of doubt in America today? Is it certain discoveries of science, incredulity about some stories in the Bible, the intolerance of Jesus' claims to be the only way? These are not even close. In his study of doubt and defection from Christianity, sociologist Christian Smith claims that far and away the chief source of doubt comes from God's apparent inactivity, indifference, or impotence in the face of tragedy and suffering in their life and in other's lives, and the apparent lack of God's interventions and help in the toil and fatigue of daily troubles.[18] Not long ago, my wife, Hope, took her weekly visit to a shelter for women with various addictions. As she was teaching the Scriptures and reaching out to them, a new resident at the shelter interrupted her by announcing that she was an atheist. When asked why she held to this view, without hesitation she bemoaned that she had often called out to God as had others she knew, and no one answered. Since (allegedly) no one answered, she concluded that no one was on the other end of the line.

In light of his study, Smith claims that a major source of faith development and strengthening are spiritual experiences: "Very many modern people have encountered and do encounter what are to them very real spiritual experiences, frequently vivid and powerful ones. And these often serve as epistemological anchors sustaining their religious faith in even the most pluralistic and secular of situations."[19]

With two qualifications, I believe Smith is onto something very important.

First, spiritual experiences in themselves can be dangerous and misleading, and so they cannot sustain on their own the weight of religious, especially Christian, conviction. However, given a framework of objective biblical revelation and a biblically pregnant view of faith, experiences of the Triune God, His love and mercy, His responses to prayer, and so on, are powerful sources of encouragement and confirmation of faith. Second, since Christian growth is a communal and not merely an individualistic endeavor, we should expand Smith's frame of reference from personal experiences of God to include hearing of, even experiencing His presence and actions vicariously in and through the lives of others.

The upshot of all this is that it is very important that we do what we can to experience as regularly as possible the presence and activity of God in and around us. In my experience, a main source for developing a more biblical, supernatural lifestyle is hearing and giving witness to answers to prayer, to the Lord guiding and speaking in various ways, to miracles of healing, demonic deliverance, and various prophetic words, words of knowledge or words of wisdom.

When we turn to the New Testament, we see that witness is born to the deeds of Jesus and His Spirit to bring about or strengthen faith (cf. John 19:35; 21:24–25; Acts 10:39). In fact, here's a major reason why the Bible contains so much historical narrative instead of coming to us as a systematic theology text in which doctrine after doctrine is clarified and affirmed: a central affirmation of Christianity is that God is a *living* God. As such, He is a God who acts, manifests Himself, and communicates in many ways with His children.

Unfortunately, many believers are suspicious, even downright skeptical of such things. In fact, many would refrain from labeling something as a supernatural manifestation of God, an angel, or a demon, even if they saw it with their own eyes. As a result, their faith may easily degenerate into a mild form of mental assent coupled with repeated attempts to be more committed. But raw, brute exercises of the will to be more committed seldom do much for folks, unless they are combined with a growing confidence and trust in God and His Word. By themselves, such acts seldom last very long, and when they taper off, guilt and shame arise and people go into hiding to protect themselves from being "exposed" for what they really (do not) believe. What's worse, when a believer sees a miracle, he or she is afraid of sharing it because he/she doesn't want to appear weird or gullible.

Not long ago I was invited to address the staff of a large church in Southern California on the topic of nurturing and strengthening the faith of their church.

Among other things, I noted that faith grows as people share with one another how God had intervened in their lives. I also urged them to find ways to encourage such sharing. As we were taking a coffee break, a young man on the church staff approached me rather sheepishly and began to share something from his own journey. As he shared, it became obvious that this was something he usually kept to himself. Four years earlier, he told me, he was in a machine shop when heavy machinery fell on him and fractured his chest and hands. He was rushed to the doctor, x-rayed, and sent home that evening with pain medication. He was scheduled to come back the next morning for further examination and surgery. That evening, some Christian friends came to his house and prayed for his healing. Even though he was on pain medication, he could still feel pain and as the people prayed, the pain vanished and the swelling in his hands left. He was startled. The next morning, the surgeons took new X-rays before the surgery and the new X-rays indicated that the fractures were completely healed. The doctors also noted that the swelling was gone, something that just does not happen so quickly on its own. When the doctors compared the two sets of X-rays, it was clear that he had been miraculously healed! The fracture-lines were gone!

Needless to say, I was deeply moved by his story. But I was shocked when I asked him if he had ever shared this story with anyone. He responded that he had kept the story to himself and not shared it because he didn't want to talk about himself or appear weird to people. He had missed a golden opportunity to strengthen the faith of others by bearing witness to God's acts on his behalf. Dear brothers and sisters, how can we encourage each other that the Christian life is a supernatural journey if we don't share these sorts of things with each other? We need to provide opportunities for credible testimonials to be given to each other on a regular basis, because they strengthen people's confidence in God and His Word. Read Christian biographies and credible books recounting answers to prayer and so forth. Ask your Christian friends regularly what they have seen and heard God do. These are important for cultivating a kingdom lifestyle that honors God.

I long to see the day when the Church will be filled with overtly supernatural, spiritually formed, intelligent and articulate ambassadors for Christ who live for His great cause in the world. This has been a lifelong passion of mine, and I hunger to see it realized more and more in the Church and my own life.

Now that you have finished, share with your friends! Write a review on Goodreads and other book-sharing sites, Tweet & Facebook your thoughts on the subject, and share your testimony on how this book impacted you at mytestimony@moody.edu.

Thank you,

The Moody Publishers Team

Notes

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15. http://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/25/opinion/sunday/neuroscience-under-attack.html?_r=3& In their otherwise excellent books, Curt Thompson and Ken Wilson are guilty of precisely this use of neuroscience. See Curt Thompson, *Anatomy of the Soul* (Carrollton, TX: Tyndale, 2010); Ken Wilson, *Mystically Wired* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2009). While clearly unintended, the neuroscientism implicit in these books contributes to the undermining of the cognitive authority of spiritual formative theology. One wonders how the great Christian mystics throughout church history did what they did without the aid of neuroscience!

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J. P. MORELAND: A SHORT CHRONOLOGY

1948	Born in Kansas City, Missouri
1968	Conversion to Christ
1970	BS Chemistry, University of Missouri
1977	Married Hope Colman
1977	Instructor, Institute of Biblical Studies, Campus Crusade (1983–97, 2001)
1979	ThM Theology (with Honors), Dallas Theological Seminary
1979	Instructor, International School of Theology (until 1984)
1979	First Daughter, Ashley, is born
1981	Second Daughter, Allison, is born
1982	MA Philosophy (with honors), University of California Riverside
1982	Community Church, Twin Peaks, CA (3 months)
1983	Interim Pastor, Corona Evangelical Free Church, Corona, CA (9 months)
1984	Co-pastor, Grace Fellowship Church, Baltimore, MD (until 1987)
1984	Associate Professor, Chesapeake Theological Seminary (until 1987)
1984	Associate Professor, Grace Discovery Center (until 1987)
1985	PhD Philosophy, University of Southern California
1986	Visiting Assistant Professor of Philosophy, Towson State University
1986	Visiting Assistant Professor of Philosophy, Western Maryland College
1986	Ethicist on Bioethics Committee, PersonaCare Nursing Homes (until 1994)
1987	Associate Professor of Philosophy, Liberty University (until 1989)
1988	Co-planter and Co-pastor, Grace Evangelical Free Church, Lynchburg, VA (until 1990)
1989	Professor of Philosophy, Liberty University (until 1990)
1990	Professor of Philosophy, Talbot School of Theology, Biola University (to present)
1990	Visiting Professor, Christ College, Irvine, CA
1991	Visiting Professor, Simon Greenleaf School of Law (Spring)
1992	Visiting Professor, International College, Honolulu, Hawaii (until 2002)
1991	Visiting Professor, Rosemead School of Psychology, Biola University (until 1994)
1994	Interim Pulpit Leader, Calvary Church, Santa Ana, CA (until 1995)
1997	Member, Executive Committee, Society of Christian Philosophers (until 1999)
1999	Member, Executive Committee, Evangelical Philosophical Society (until 2003)
1999	Member of the Advisory Board, Philosophia Christi (until 2003)
2000	Fellow, Center for the Renewal of Science & Culture, Discovery Institute (to present)
2001	Fellow, Wilberforce Forum (to present)
2003	Director, EIDOS Christian Center (to present)
2006	Member, Executive Committee, Evangelical Philosophical Society (to present)
2012	Research Fellow, Center for Christian Thought, Biola University (until May 2013)

The Writings *of* J. P. Moreland

"Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men."
COLOSSIANS 3:23 NASB

EACH SECTION is arranged in a descending order. The first entries are J. P.'s own authored or edited books, followed by his contributions to other books, scholarly journals, book reviews, and finally magazine and online articles.

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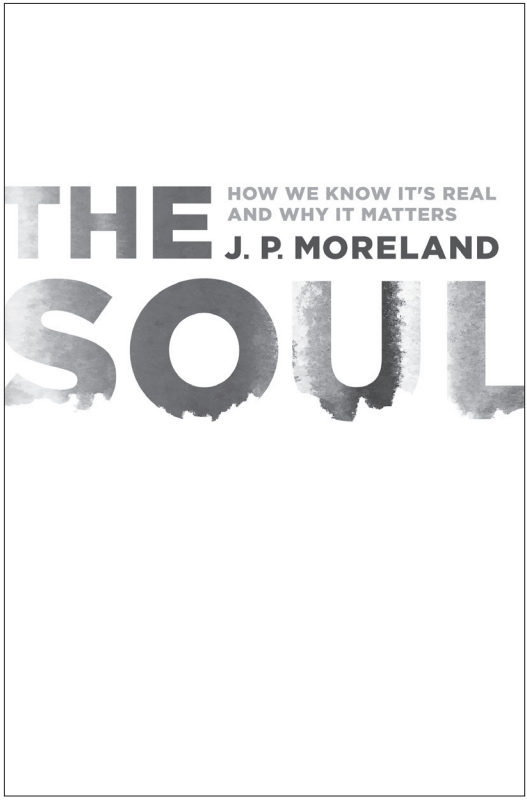

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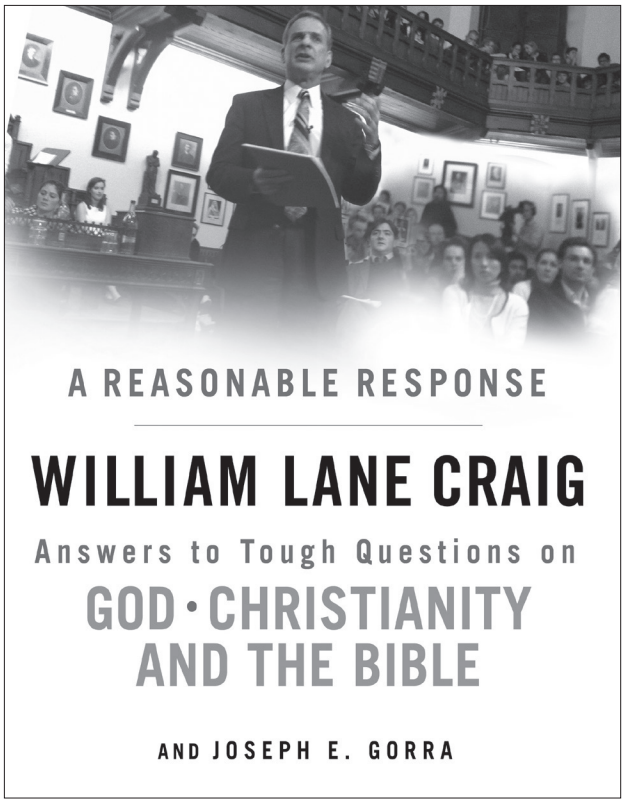

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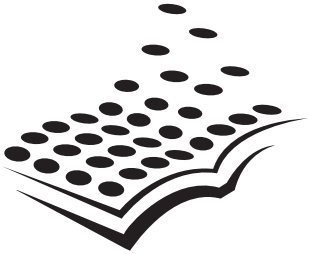

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